the seeker after power did not always, nor perhaps often, tell any one what he was going to do. 787 785

Three modes of burial were practised by the Blackfeet. They buried their dead on platforms placed in trees, on platforms in lodges, and on the ground in lodges. If a man dies in a lodge, it is never used again. The people would be afraid of the man's ghost. The lodge is often used to wrap the body in, or perhaps the man may be buried in it. 764 [768]

As soon as a person is dead, be it man, woman, or child, the body is immediately prepared for burial, by the nearest female relations. Until recently, the corpse was wrapped in a number of robes, then in a lodge covering, laced with rawhide ropes, and placed on a platform of lodge poles, arranged on the branches of some convenient tree. Some times the outer wrapping — the lodge covering — was omitted. If the deceased was a man, his weapons, and often his medicine, were buried with him. With women a few cooking utensils and implements for tanning robes were placed on the scaffolds. When a man was buried on a platform in a lodge, the platform was usually suspended from the lodge poles.

Sometimes, when a great chief or noted warrior died, his lodge would be moved some little distance from the camp, and set up in a patch of brush. It would be carefully pegged down all around, and stones piled on the edges to make it additionally firm. For still greater security, a rope fastened to the lodge poles, where they come together at the smoke hole, came down, and was securely tied to a peg in the ground in the centre of the lodge, where the fireplace would ordinarily be. Then the beds were made up all around the lodge, and on one of them was placed the corpse, lying as if asleep. The man's weapons, pipe, war clothing, and medicine were placed near him, and the door then closed. No one ever again entered such a lodge. Outside the lodge, a number of his horses, often twenty or more, were killed, so 766 768 [775]

6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

monies in which visiting dignitaries were given an Indian name and adopted, symbolically, into the Blackfeet tribe. If any family conducted a memorial service for a deceased relative, or staged a give-away to honor visitors, he was called upon to be the crier. As crier he announced the import of the ceremony, led in chanting the proper song, or cried out the occasion for the give-away and called out the names of those to be honored with a gift.

In years past he had been employed by the Great Northern Railway as an official greeter of tourists arriving by train at Glacier Park, and as an entertainer at the inns within the Park where he and his friends staged Indian dances for the tourists.

Buffalo Heart, with others of his peers, had a place on the Honorary Tribal Council, and was given a small per diem for attendance at tribal council meetings. He was often chosen to accompany council members on trips to Washington, D.C. for the purpose of lobbying for or against proposed legislation which would affect Indians. In his regalia he furnished a bit of Indian color, as well as advice, to the proceedings.

Buffalo Heart and his fellow members of the Honorary Council felt that they represented the voice of the full-blood portion of the tribe and took every occasion to make long speeches in Blackfeet, urging harmony and trust, and asking for more attention to the needs of the people. But people paid little attention to the speeches; instead they talked, moved about, and impatiently filled in time until the Honorary Councilmen had had their say. On several occasions councilmen told the interpreter: "Tell him to make it short." The people in general felt some pride in their old-timers, but mixed this with a feeling of impatience and bare tolerance when the chiefs seemed to be taking themselves too seriously.

Buffalo Heart, and the others like him, usually lived among clusters of full-bloods in the more run-down areas of town, in small outlying communities, or, in a few cases, in more remote areas of the reservation. Buffalo Heart lived in a small two-room shack on Moccasin Flat, an area of shacks and cabins without sewer or water service, on the edge of Browning. The houses immediately surrounding his were occupied by some of his kin—a married son and his family, two married daughters and their families, and the family group of his brother.

The old man's home was the center for Indian gatherings. Here he and his friends conducted the religious rituals, bundle openings, and other ceremonies they wished to celebrate. Those who were singers would gather here occasionally for a song service—a meeting where they would drum and sing old and new songs. Buffalo Heart served as a tie to the old days, a source of information on lore and ritual, and an available medicine man for those who wished an Indian cure. The younger members of his family might participate in these functions, but usually just watched with a respectful air. As one family member said: "You join in even if you don't believe—it's part of the old Indian ways."

Buffalo Heart, however, was more than a man of the past. He was a medicine man and conducted curing ceremonies, yet he and those whom he had cured more often availed themselves of the services of the local doctors and hospital. Buffalo Heart was known as a Catholic and attended church occasionally, yet he was also considered to be a repository for, and a leader in, the present-day

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 4]

6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

were open equally to all according to one's energy and ability. Tribes, bands, and even families might have their favorite and usual area within which to hunt, but these ties to a territory were unrelated to ideas of ownership of land, game or plants. Once labor had been expended, however—an animal killed, a horse stolen, a plant gathered, a stick or stone picked up, or a dream dreamed—the product was imbued with value and became personal property.

It is possible to separate food from other types of property because it was not owned by individuals in the same way as were other goods. Food "belonged" to the collector but was put in charge of the women of the collector's own or adopted family upon return to camp. Food then belonged to the family, yet even this title was clouded by a series of social obligations. A hunter was obliged to share with anyone who had helped him in the kill, with the man whose horse he had borrowed, or with the man from whom he had obtained hunting power. He was expected to provide some part of the meat for the sick or disabled, and he also might have had obligations to some of his in-laws. The family used what remained. In times of famine these rules were set aside and food became band property to be shared by all. Food had additional uses, both ceremonial and social—feasts were an important part of many rituals, to be described later, and as part of the everyday social life of the men, as noted above.

Horses and other goods were individually owned by men, women or children. Personal dreams, experiences, exploits, and the symbols of these were also personal property and all could be transferred—sold, exchanged, given, or loaned, in whole or in part—by one person to another. These other goods appear to have been free of forced sharing in times of scarcity. The rule appears to have been that none should starve, but other needs of the poor had to be met by appeals to the generosity of those who had more. The unfortunate were cared for but usually given worn or castoff clothing, tepee covers, tools, robes, and so on, rarely things of much value.

Goods other than food were used by their owners or were used as exchange goods. Exchange might be for economic reasons, as when a man gave a horse to a medicine man for a cure, or to get a charm to insure success in horse stealing, war, or other endeavor. Goods might be given in exchange for the supernatural power of another. One kind of property could be used to purchase another, for example, furs and guns for horses, or horses for tepee covers. Another type of transfer was for ritual reasons, as when goods were offered to the sun in the Sun Dance, to ghosts or other spirit forces in propitiation, petition, or thanksgiving. Here too could be classified the practice of placing some of the property of a deceased with his body in order that he might have the use of such things in the next world.

A third use, more difficult to classify, would be the exchange of property in gambling. The Blackfeet were avid gamblers and some on occasion were known to have gambled away all their possessions.

The fourth use of property was its transfer, by gift or exchange, in order to gain increased prestige and status. Among the Blackfeet property was accumulated and wealth created, to be used for the demonstration of generosity. A man secured horses and other goods in order to give them away. He loaned a horse to another hunter, in part to share in the meat, in part to create an obligation for

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

[ca. 1850]

THE STAFF OF LIFE

Women who dressed thousands of robes for the fur trade each year also prepared hairy buffalo robes for the winter overclothing and bedding of their own families. Robes were cut up to make hair-lined mittens, winter caps with ear flaps, winter moccasins, and ceremonial headdresses.

Soft-dressed buffalo skins without the hair were used for lodge covers and linings, for pad saddles, and for winding sheets for the dead. The smoke-softened upper portions of old, worn lodge covers were salvaged, cut up, and reused for breechclouts and items of winter clothing—men's and boys' shirts, women's and girls' dresses, and leggings for both sexes. The thinner skins of buffalo calves were made into tobacco pouches and winter underpants worn by girls and women.

Buffalo horns made practical powder flasks for Blackfoot warriors. Horns were also fashioned into spoons, cups, and ladles. The long, shaggy hair of the head, beard, and shoulders was braided into rope halters and bridles. Hair supplied the soft stuffing for pad saddles and balls used in games. Hair ornaments hung from lodges, headdresses, and war clubs. The buffalo's tail also was used for tipi ornaments. Mounted on a stick, the tail served as a fly brush. Buffalo hoofs strung on rawhide cords made noisy rattles. The scrotum of a bull provided a durable stirrup cover. The Blackfoot Indians derived their best glue from a bull's phallus, cut into small pieces and boiled.

No less useful were many of the internal parts of this animal. Buffalo sinew supplied thread for sewing and a strong, flat cord for binding heads and feathers to arrowshafts. Bow strings and bow backings were both of twisted bull sinew. The brains, liver, and fat were rubbed into hides to soften them during the skin-dressing process. Buffalo fat also was used to polish stone tobacco pipes and to mix with earth pigments to provide an oily base for paints. A yellow paint could be obtained from the buffalo's gallstone. Water buckets were made from the paunch, and the bladder was used as a bag for marrow grease.

The boss rib of a buffalo made a serviceable tool for straightening arrowshafts. A series of curved ribbones furnished the runners for a boy's sled.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

There was a women's society among the Blood and Northern Blackfoot tribes which was unknown among the Piegans. Its members were wives of the most highly respected men in their tribes. Prior to the sun dance in summer, members of this Matoki society built a ceremonial lodge which resembled a buffalo corral, and on the final day of their four-day ritual re-enacted the drive of buffalo into the corral. Some of the members wore buffalo headdresses and mimicked the actions of buffalo.[12]

The aged were no longer abandoned on the plains as had been the common lot of enfeebled old people before the Blackfeet acquired horses. If an old man or woman was too feeble to ride alone, he or she was carried on the A-shaped horse travois. If the head of a family knew he was about to die, he called his relatives together and told them how he wished his horses and other property divided among them. If he died without having made such a verbal will, the other people in camp made a run for his property as soon as they heard his relatives weeping and wailing. Men ran for his horses; women went for his household equipment. The men might take all his best horses and leave the poorest ones for his widow. Close relatives of the deceased, preoccupied with mourning his loss, made no attempt to prevent this raid on his property. Custom decreed that they should not do so. These raids were made with particular relish upon the property of a man of wealth who had had a reputation for miserliness during his lifetime.

No such action followed the death of a highly respected, generous leader. His lodge interior was carefully arranged just as it had been when he had entertained prominent guests. His body was dressed in his finest clothing and laid upon a raised platform of poles in the center of his lodge. Then his relatives painted simple representations of his brave war deeds on his favorite horse, braided its mane and tail and tied feathers in them, and placed his best saddle on the horse's back. In the presence of all the people of the camp this horse and others to be sacrificed were led to the door of the death lodge. Each in turn was shot

[12] *Ibid.*, 430–35.

with a gun. A close relative of the dead man pressed the gun against the horse's head and pulled the trigger. The bodies of the dead horses were left where they fell, but camp members were permitted to strip them of their valuable riding gear. The gear was of no more value to the deceased, for according to Blackfoot belief the spirit horse joined the spirit of its master wearing the trappings it bore at the moment of its death. The death lodge was left undisturbed. People of the dead man's camp feared to loot it lest his spirit return to haunt them.

Prominent chiefs sometimes expressed the desire to have their bodies taken to the fur posts when they died. It was then the responsibility of the fur company to bury them. Maximilian witnessed a double burial of two relatives of Bear Chief by the traders at Fort McKenzie in the summer of 1833.

> The two Indians were laid in the same grave, wrapped in a red blanket and buffalo skin, over which was laid a piece of colored stuff, given by Mr. Mitchell [the chief trader]. The bottom and sides of the grave were lined with boards; the body, too was covered with wood; his bridle, whip, and some other trifles, were thrown in, and the grave filled with earth.[13]

A number of prominent Piegan chiefs who died in the fifties and sixties were taken to Fort Benton for burial.

Women prepared bodies for burial. The deceased were usually dressed in their best clothes, their faces were painted, and the bodies were sewn in buffalo robes and deposited in the forks of trees. Sometimes they were placed on the ground in a ravine or on the summit of a hill, then covered with rocks and dirt to keep the wolves from molesting them. It was customary to kill a man's favorite horse—his trusted companion on the buffalo hunt and war party—near his burial place. Poor families who could not afford to sacrifice the dead man's horse cut its mane and tail short and considered that the animal was in mourning for its master.

[13] *Travels*, II, 141.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

a wild animal on the prairie & attempt to tame him we sometimes find it very hard. It may take a long time & a great deal of patience. But almost any animal can be tamed by kindness & perseverance. We have been running wild on the prairie and now we want the white sons and daughters of our Great Father to come to our country and tame us. . . . We have a fine country & we are not ashamed to have white men come & see it.[35]

The following year Lame Bull's band was hunting buffalo near the Sweetgrass Hills. Amid the dust of the chase Lame Bull's horse was attacked by an enraged buffalo bull. The horse fell. Lame Bull's ribs were crushed and his neck broken. According to one Indian account, Lame Bull was buried on a platform inside his lodge and twenty of his horses were killed for his use in the afterworld. According to another story, the body of this great chief was taken to Fort Benton and buried there by the whites.

My older Piegan informants said that Lame Bull was about sixty years of age when he was killed. Although physically small, this courageous veteran of many intertribal wars and staunch advocate of peace with the whites had great influence among his people. Had he lived, his example and wise counsel might have helped to minimize interracial tensions in the Blackfoot country during the difficult decade that followed.[36]

Many of the other Piegan band chiefs who placed their marks on the 1855 treaty died equally violent deaths. Big Snake (rattlesnake), chief of the Small Brittle Fat Band, loud-mouthed announcer in the tribal summer encampment and prominent war leader, was killed in a battle with the Cree Indians near the Cypress Hills in 1858. Little Dog, Governor Stevens' favorite, chief of the Black Patched Moccasins Band and successor to Lame Bull as head chief of his tribe, was murdered by his own

[35] Klett, *Missionary Endeavors of the Presbyterian Church Among the Blackfeet Indians in the 1850s*, Presbyterian Historical Society, 343-44.

[36] When President Franklin D. Roosevelt was inducted into the Blackfoot tribe during his visit to the Glacier National Park in 1934, he was given the name "Lone Chief," in honor of this great leader, the first signer of the first treaty between "The Blackfoot Nation" and the United States.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

inaccurate in that they included some Indians who were counted twice.

Since their removal to the new reservation, the Piegan Indians had remained at peace with the whites, although their young men continued their occasional horse raids against alien tribes. Fearing that they would be prevented from going if their objectives were known, these war parties left secretly, usually at night. The code of laws adopted in 1875 continued in operation. Little Plume, the popular head chief, died on August 22, 1877. He was buried in the ground on a hill overlooking the agency, and his favorite horse was shot beside his grave in accordance with traditional custom. Two months later the leading Indians in council elected White Calf head chief and Generous Woman second chief of the tribe.[18]

A year later (October 21, 1878) Generous Woman died and was buried beside Little Plume. He was succeeded in the chieftaincy of the Grease Melters, the most populous of all Piegan bands, by Three Suns (also known as Big Nose), a famous warrior who was very popular among the people of his tribe. Whether or not Three Suns also succeeded to Generous Woman's title of second chief of the tribe, it is certain that both the Indians and the agent regarded him as more than a mere band chief. The following May it was Three Suns' band that was the first to receive annuities, and it was Three Suns who supervised the division of annuities among the remaining ten bands, including the Skunks, the band of White Calf.[19]

As leader of the conservative, heathen faction on the reservation, Three Suns became a powerful rival of White Calf, leader of the Christian, progressive faction. Many of my elderly informants regarded Three Suns as the real head of the tribe and claimed that he had the larger following among the Indians. On the other hand, they blamed White Calf for being a tool of the whites, who had too readily agreed to the white men's wishes

[18] John Young, Monthly Reports to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September and November, 1877, Indian Office Records.

[19] Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 8, 1879, Indian Office Records.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

existed. Nevertheless the available data from the Blackfoot, Sarsi, Assiniboin, Crow, Arikara, Teton Dakota, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Chiricahua Apache indicate a common substratum of beliefs and usages which strongly suggests that the horse medicine cults of these tribes were historically related. Native testimony to the effect that the Assiniboin and Crow derived their horse-medicine cults from the Blackfoot suggests that the Blackfoot were at least a secondary center of diffusion of the cult. However, native traditions also suggest that the Oglala and Cheyenne as well as the Blackfoot possessed active horse-medicine cults early in the 19th century. I have cited proof of the existence of the cult among the Arikara as early as 1803–4. It is probable that some tribes of the Great Plains possessed horse medicine cults in the 18th century, although the evidence is insufficient to enable me to name them.

The horse-medicine cult certainly appears to have been a native invention. Possibly it began to develop shortly after the acquisition of horses in response to the need for the services of veterinarians to care for these precious possessions. Their actions clothed in secrecy, blessed with supernatural sanctions, and embellished with elaborate ritual, their powers feared by their fellow tribesmen, these primitive horse doctors may have extended their activities to include the control of the actions of horses in the hunt, in war, and in horse races, and added some of the functions of the earlier cult of healers of sick humans. On the other hand, the first horse medicine men may have been persons who had previously treated humans and/or dogs, and who already possessed considerable knowledge of the medicinal plants of their tribal habitats. Through processes of trial and error they may have discovered additional medicines which proved efficacious in the treatment of horses. Although ritual and magical factors played prominent roles in the use of horse medicines, there was an empirical element in the selection of plant materials administered in the curing rituals.

SACRIFICE OF HORSES AFTER THE DEATH OF THEIR OWNERS

A Blackfoot Indian felt a strong attachment for his favorite horse, his trusted companion on the buffalo hunt and scalp raid. If this animal died it was not unusual for his proud owner to weep publicly. The owner might request his family to have his favorite horse killed beside his own burial place, if that horse survived him. Thus the close companionship between man and horse might continue in the spirit world. However, poor families, who could not afford to sacrifice a horse, more commonly cut short the mane and tail of the deceased owner's favorite mount. Green Grass Bull explained that the horse was then considered to be in mourning for its owner in much the

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same way as was the mourning wife who cut the hair of her head. Sometimes the mane and tail of a woman's favorite pack or travois horse were cut after her death. Horses so treated could be used without any period of delay after the owner's death.

Maximilian (1906, vol. 23, p. 121) was told of instances when "twelve or fifteen horses were killed . . . at the funeral of a celebrated chief." However, his mention of 150 horses killed following the death of "Sacomapoh" probably is an exaggeration. Weasel Tail said the greatest number of horses he had seen killed at one burial was 10. The Piegan continued the custom of killing horses as grave escorts until about the year 1895. Among the Canadian Blackfoot the custom was followed sporadically for several years after that date.

Upon the death of an important leader the sacrifice of horses was coupled with an elaborate ceremony of burial in a death lodge. Among the great chiefs honored with death-lodge burial were Lame Bull, first signer of the 1855 treaty with the United States Government (who died in 1858) and Many Horses, the wealthiest Piegan (who died in 1866). Lesser chiefs and prominent warriors received this honorary burial on a less grandiose scale.

When one of these leaders died his lodge was arranged on the inside just as it had been when he was alive, with beds and backrests in place and his favorite equipment displayed as it had been when he used to entertain prominent guests in his lodge. His body was dressed in his finest clothing and laid on a bed in the lodge, or preferably on a pole platform erected in the center of the lodge, built high enough to prevent predatory animals from molesting the body. The body was laid upon the platform with feet facing the doorway (east). Then the deceased's close relatives prepared the horses to be killed, decorating them with elaborate and costly riding gear. The dead man's favorite horse was painted with pictographs representing the owner's coups. That horse's tail was braided and tied in a ball, and a feather pendant was tied in it. His mane was braided and feathers were tied in it also.

Everyone in camp attended the funeral. The horses to be sacrificed were led to the door of the death lodge. Each horse in turn was shot with a gun, pressed against its head and fired by a relative of the deceased. After all the horses were killed the riding gear of the dead man's favorite horse sometimes was stripped off and placed inside the death lodge. At other times the people of the camp were privileged to strip the dead horses of their gear for their own use. Green Grass Bull explained the Blackfoot belief that the spirit of the horse joined that of its owner, wearing the gear it bore at the time it was killed. After the horse's spirit had departed the actual trappings had no more value to the dead Indian than did the carcass of the sacrificed horse itself.

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After the horses were killed in front of the lodge, rocks were piled in lines extending outward from the death lodge in the four cardinal directions. Each pile of rocks represented one of the departed leader's coups. Usually these death lodges were erected in out of the way localities at some distance from camp. Occasionally the lodges were looted by passing enemy war parties. But none of the valuable articles in the death lodge were disturbed by members of his camp for fear the dead man's spirit would haunt them. The bodies of the dead horses were left to decay where they fell.[92]

COMPARATIVE DATA ON HORSES AS GRAVE ESCORTS

The literature reveals that the custom of killing horses after the owner's death was followed by other Plains and Plateau Indian tribes. The destruction of horses appears to have been greatest after the death of a wealthy member of a tribe that was relatively rich in horses. Thus over 70 horses were said to have been killed after the death of a leading Kiowa chief (Yarrow, 1881, p. 143). On the other hand, the Plains Cree, notoriously poor in horses, were content to clip the manes and tails of the horses of the deceased (Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 250). Some Central Plains tribes killed the horses by strangling them (Omaha—Fletcher and La Flesche, 1911, p. 83; Kansa—Bushnell, 1927, p. 53; Oto and Missouri—Yarrow, 1881, p. 96). Chiricahua Apache either stabbed or shot the horses (Opler, 1941, p. 474). While the Assiniboin, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Teton Dakota shot them, as did the Blackfoot (Denig, 1930, p. 572; Grinnell, 1923, vol. 2, p. 160; Michelson, 1933, p. 606; Bushnell, 1927, p. 40; Yarrow, 1881, p. 180), most tribes simply left the dead bodies under the burial scaffold or tree, or beside the grave. However, the Coeur d'Alene skinned the dead horses and hung the skins at the grave. If the skins were needed they suspended only the horse's hoofs (Teit, 1930, pp. 173–174). On occasion the Nez Percé skinned and stuffed the horses and set them up as grave monuments (Spinden, 1908, p. 252).

Other tribes reported to have killed horses as grave escorts were the Sarsi (Jenness, 1938, p. 39), Crow (Denig, 1930, p. 479; Lowie, 1912, p. 227), Arapaho (Kroeber, 1902–7, p. 17), Sisseton Dakota (Yarrow, 1881, p. 109), Wichita (ibid., p. 103), Comanche (Neighbors, 1852, vol. 2, p. 133; Yarrow, 1881, p. 99), Wind River and Lemhi Shoshoni (Lowie, 1909, p. 215; 1924 b, p. 282), Bannock (Marquis, 1928, p. 105), and Flathead (Mengarini, 1871–72, p. 82). This custom of the Plains Indians appears to have been an expression of the widespread

[92] Denig (1930, p. 573) wrote that very brave and renowned Assiniboin warriors sometimes requested that their bodies be placed inside their lodges after their death. The-Iron-Arrow-Point, noted chief of the Rock Band of Assiniboin, received a death-lodge burial ante-1850.

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primitive custom of providing the dead with objects thought to be useful to them in the afterlife.

Cropping the mane and tail of a dead man's horse or horses provided a method of honoring the dead without sacrificing valuable property. Probably it was much more common among Plains and Plateau tribes than the few, scattered references in the literature indicate. The wealthy Comanche and the Chiricahua Apache cut the manes and tails of those horses of the deceased man which had not been killed at the grave (Parker, 1855, p. 685; Opler, 1940, p. 474). Sarsi clipped the hair of horses that belonged to a warrior killed in battle (Jenness, 1938, p. 39). Flathead considered their mourning period for the dead ended when the clipped mane and tail of the dead man's horse grew out (Turney-High, 1937, p. 146). Other tribes reported to have cut the manes and tails of dead men's horses were the Plains Cree (Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 250), Assiniboin (Lowie, 1909, p. 42), Crow (Leonard, 1904, p. 271), Teton Dakota (Dorsey, 1894, p. 487), and Lemhi Shoshoni (Lowie, 1909, p. 215).

DISPOSAL OF HORSES AFTER THE DEATH OF OWNER

If the head of a Blackfoot family knew he was about to die he called his relatives together and told them how he wished his horses and other property divided among them, designating which items were to be received by each relative. If a man died without a verbal will procedures differed. His eldest son, or other close relative might take charge of the distribution of the property. However, a distant relative, angered at being left out of consideration, might help himself to a horse without its being reclaimed by the one to whom it was allotted.

I asked particularly about the distribution of the great herd of Many Horses, wealthiest of Blackfoot horse owners, after he and his favorite wife were murdered by the Gros Ventres in the summer of 1866. Lazy Boy said that after the battle between the Piegan and Gros Ventres, which followed shortly after the discovery of Many Horses' body, the Piegan erected a death lodge for Many Horses, and his eldest daughters selected more than 10 of his favorite horses to be killed before the burial lodge. Later Lazy Boy's father, Calf Looking, a band chief in the Piegan camp, took charge of the distribution of Many Horses' herd. Many Horses' eldest daughter instructed him to divide the horses among the three surviving wives, the several daughters, and one son of the deceased chief. After each received a sizable herd, she asked that the rest of the horses be given to the people. Every member of Many Horses' band received a horse and some persons outside the band also got one.

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demanded an explanation. The Blackfoot looked upon the horse as a godsend. In their mythology it was represented as a gift of powerful sky or water spirits. Horses were thought to possess supernatural powers. The ability of certain horses to perform feats of unusual strength or endurance was proof to the Indians that those animals possessed those powers to a very high degree.

Some horses were believed to have appeared to their owners in dreams and conferred their powers upon them. Through such transference of powers the secret horse medicine cult was believed to have originated. The relatively few members of this cult carefully guarded their knowledge of the origin of their medicines and restricted their use by outsiders in such a way that their secrets would not be revealed. Members were feared and respected by fellow tribesmen to the extent that many aged Indians still fear to discuss the cult. There are no other Blackfoot ceremonial organizations whose secrets have been so closely guarded, with the possible exceptions of the Horn Society among the Blood and the Tobacco Planters of the North Blackfoot. The influence of horse medicine men's activities pervaded the fields of warfare, hunting, recreation, and curing, as well as the daily lives of their people. Their ritual practices were designed to heal sick and wounded horses and to cure humans, to revive exhausted horses, to assist individuals in capturing horses from the enemy or in handicapping enemy war horses, to prevent hunting horses from falling in slippery winter weather and to retard the movements of buffalo in the hunt, to handicap race horses, to capture wild horses, and to prevent horses from straying from their owner's herds. Their ceremony, the horse dance, followed the generalized Blackfoot ceremonial bundle pattern but had distinctive features. Taboos observed by horse medicine men also were distinctive. There was a close relationship between the horse medicine men and owners of medicine pipes whom the horse specialists customarily aided. These specialists also aided other Indians in the preparation of protective "horse bridles" worn under the heads of war horses on scalp raids.

Indirectly the influence of the horse affected other Blackfoot religious rituals. Horse payments were invariably made as inducements to owners of ceremonial bundles to transfer their power to prospective purchasers. At intervals throughout the tribal Sun Dance ceremony participants were required to recite their coups, most commonly acquired through raiding for horses. In the two cases of self-torture during a Sun Dance that have been recorded in detail, the suppliants are known to have vowed to undergo the torture just before entering enemy camps to take horses.

Finally the horse was given a role of prominence in burial and mourning rites. The favorite horses of a wealthy individual were

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

killed near his grave so that their spirits might accompany his to the afterworld and there continue to be of service. The family that could not afford to sacrifice a horse was content to cut the mane and tail of one or more horses belonging to the deceased. There is a tradition to the effect that dogs were sometimes killed at the graves of their owners before the Blackfoot acquired horses. If such was the case, the substitution of horses for dogs simply indicated Blackfoot recognition of the greater value and usefulness of horses in the afterworld as well as in this one.

THE HORSE AND THE FUR TRADE

It has not been my intention to argue the influence of the horse in Blackfoot Indian culture at the expense of minimizing the influence of the fur trade.[86] Both were powerful catalytic agents which contributed to the reshaping of Plains Indian culture in the historic period. Among the Blackfoot they were contemporary influences. Both the horse and trade goods began to reach the Blackfoot before the middle of the 18th century and remained potent influences until the end of buffalo days. However, it is not easy to isolate the influence of one as opposed to the other. The two influences complemented one another in bringing about radical changes in the tribal way of life. For example, both the horse and the fur trade encouraged Indian destruction of buffalo resources and contributed toward the extermination of the buffalo in the Blackfoot country. Use of horses made it easy for Indians to kill many more buffalo than were required for their subsistence. The fur trade, offering ready markets for excess hides and pemmican, made it profitable for them to do so.

Looking at the question historically, we must recognize that the Blackfoot played a relatively insignificant part in the fur trade prior to 1831. Both Anthony Hendry and Mathew Cocking dejectedly reported the "Archithinue" Indians' lack of interest in traveling to the British posts to trade in the third quarter of the 18th century. Known movements of the Blackfoot during the 18th century were away from the British and French posts on the lower Saskatchewan to the eastward of them, southwestward toward the tribes from whom they captured horses. After British posts were established in their country, on the Upper Saskatchewan, in the late years of that century and early years of the following one, the Blackfoot showed little interest in trapping small and valuable fur-bearing mammals for the trade. They preferred to hunt buffalo on horseback and to remain relatively independent of the traders. They traded primarily horses and pemmican at the forts.

[86] I have been a student of the fur trade among the Blackfoot for more than a decade. I am well aware of the influence of that trade on Blackfoot material culture.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

556 184 425 this was as nothing compared with a Pointed Plume's equipment. "When I was married in 1905," said he, "my father turned over his whole herd of horses (about 100) to me. A few others had been given to me previously as gifts. My father told me that if I took care of the cattle I would get my share, and in 1916, he gave me twenty-five head . . . the next year my father gave me another twenty-five." It is not surprising that this favorite son was reluctant to leave his rich father and a secure and indulgent home for a few dollars in wages.

556 184 [454] All in all, it was still the owners of the large herds who benefited most from the growing cash income. They plowed back a considerable portion of it into better homes, better barns, better furnishings and better fences, as the Government urged them to do. Yet a goodly amount of cash was still available to them. This the inspector reported was "squandered in [432] riotous living." Schooled in the old Blackfoot tradition of "generosity," [181] these Indians felt that added prestige could only accrue from conspicuous spending. The same group that had made fine payments for pipes, bundles, and memberships with their surplus horses, were now able to stage bigger and better feasts and give away valuable goods, such as cloth, blankets, shawls, in quantities unknown for many years.

431 556 184 [585] Gifts flowed freely, but the circle within which they flowed remained, as before, narrow and selected. The rich gave to the rich, to their close relatives, or to those to whom they were under obligation for some past favor. For example: Yellow Wolf chose his son's best friend, the *miniposa*, Buffalo Horn, to be the husband of his brother's daughter. Pointed Plume said, "At the time of the marriage, I gave Buffalo Horn his weasel tail suit and a bonnet for a present." And then he added, "Later Buffalo Horn gave me a similar outfit." To the goodly gift of ten horses contributed to the bride price by his brother, Yellow Wolf added another five. All went to the rich father of Buffalo Horn. When Pointed Plume married the favorite daughter of White Buffalo Robe, Chief of the Lone-Fighter's Band, Yellow Wolf [764] gave the already wealthy leader twenty-five horses. At a funeral feast given for Round Chief by his adopted son, Big Head and his nephew, Pointed Plume, the latter gave away two horses—one to Black Bear, his maternal uncle whom his father Yellow Wolf had superseded for the chieftaincy, the other to Split Arrow, the father of Dancing Bird who was his [575] wife at this time. He said, "When Round Chief joined the Horn Society, he took me in as his partner. I was about fourteen at the time. This shows how close we were." It also shows why he participated so actively in the death feast.

431 556 585 425 Ned Sloane paid three horses as a bride price to his father-in-law, Charging Buffalo, who distributed them as follows: one horse was given to Charging Buffalo's brother-in-law who had previously made a gift of a

177 184 666 602 People say that if you can get the support of a few key people you can be assured of the "full-blood vote," indicating the belief that kinsmen will vote with their family leaders.

Church Services

177 184 797 People of both orientations attend church services according to individual interests and needs. Leaders of the different denominations actively proselyte among both unaffiliated people and the membership of the other churches. Interest in church attendance appears to follow the patterns indicated in the responses of the members of the probability sample, where only three of the Indian-oriented and four of the white-oriented reported regular church attendance.

Funerals

177 184 764 From reports, funerals were attended by family and friends, and in this context kin ties and the personal characteristics of the deceased were more influential than cultural orientations in decisions as to whether or not to attend.

Rodeos and Sports Events

177 184 541 Rodeos and sports events were occasions for the largest gatherings which included relatively equal attendance and participation by people of both orientations. The rodeo attracted the largest crowds. These were public events open to all and were given wide publicity; the participants were largely local people and were drawn from both orientation groups.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve

remain the honoured and respected heads of extended families whose lives are not chaotic. The residuals of a broken household rejoin their more stable relatives, while the new household, if not already provided with a residence, joins another group of relatives.

Death furnishes a final point where social disorganization may occur. It is faced today by some with terror, by others with equanimity. This seems to depend upon whether the dying person is mainly Christian or Blackfoot in outlook. Christians, uncertain of the future and concerned with the process of moral retribution, contrast with the Blackfoot who have no idea of atonement, for the mythical Sand Hills are considered a haven where good and bad alike are welcomed by their deceased kinsmen.

As death approaches, relatives gather around the dying person to bid him farewell. The immediate kin usually remain until the end, while others come and go. All are expected to help defray the cost of a funeral. Sometimes in the last hours a priest will be summoned to baptize a person of Indian faith, just as a kind of insurance.

After the last breath the formalities of mourning begin. In former times the nearest kin would don old clothes, cut their hair, and gash themselves with a knife. Old clothes and dishevelled appearance still obtain, and a mourner is vigilantly guarded by kinsmen to prevent serious self-injury. In the meanwhile others are dispatched to get the coffin, arrange for the burial service, and dig the grave. The corpse is attired in best raiment.

Funerals follow a simplified white pattern suffused with Indian custom. Rather than leave the coffin in the open or under a tipi, burial has been adopted to forestall grave robbers. There are no white prayers at the grave, but as the coffin is lowered, an intense wailing begins by all spectators. Kinsmen who heap the earth on top of the coffin receive special gifts. Once, a few years ago, however, a man received special supernatural powers in a dream to handle corpses and bury them, and he took no payment for his services.

The subsequent mourning follows the Blackfoot pattern. If the deceased is a key member of a household, especially a spouse, all unwilled possessions to the last packet of cigarettes are given away because the sight of these articles could only increase the pain of separation by reminding one constantly of the deceased. If a sibling, a child, or aged person dies, the mourning is not so intense, and the useful household effects remain in the hands of the mourners. In any case some kind of give-away with many people present is

their way to Waterton and Banff National Parks or to the famous Calgary Stampede in Canada. Yet there are areas far enough away from the speeding traffic for the Belly Buttes to remain the isolated center of the Holy Spirit among the Blood People.

The Power of the Buttes is felt by all who go near them, even when there is no encampment in progress. One winter a desperate family searched an old Sun Dance campsite for firewood, which is scarce out on the prairie. This family discovered they were using the fallen log of the sacred Center Pole for fuel when they were awakened during a cold night by an unseen Power singing the holy Center Pole songs in a loud voice. Another time, an enterprising rancher from our reserve began to fence in the Buttes so that his cattle could graze there. But he was discouraged from building his fence when strange sensations overtook him; older relatives reminded him that Holy Spirits must not be disturbed without some sacrifice.

□

In 1972 the Sun Dance Encampment was located near the edge of the flat that overlooks the tree- and brush-lined Belly River bottoms. As the flat rises up from the river, the Belly Buttes rise up from the flat, farther to the east. It is in those Buttes that many men have gone to find their visions and Spirit helpers. Bears lived there not long ago. Today, eagles sometimes build their nests there, and mountain lions cross tracks with porcupines and coyotes. In some of the many caves and crevices are now the final resting places of those Old People who passed away after laws were made forbidding the traditional practice of placing bodies near to the Spirit World on top of scaffolds or in branches of trees.

It was still morning when we arrived at the campground with our outfit. Our spiritual grandparents, Mokakin and Ponah, pointed out a vacant spot next to their tipi where they thought we should camp. Mokakin, who was attending his

the new Horns came to see me already. They all want new pipes. Could you help me make them?" 276 575

Each member of the Horns Society must have his own smoking pipe. It should be of our traditional style, with a black stone bowl. There are very few such pipes left among our People. Most of them have been buried with their owners or sold to collectors and museums. [764] [432]

Atsitsina went on: "Used to be lots of men here that could make pipes, but not any more. My dad made lots of pipes. All the time he worked on one or two, when he wasn't busy doctoring or leading ceremonies. He used to get a good horse for just one pipe. I think he was the last one that made pipes in the really old way [using the elements of hot and cold to chip the stone into shape]. I never learned how to do it that way. Only way I can make them is with a hacksaw and a file and a hand drill." 324 276 [178] [435] [412]

I saw evidence of Atsitsina's skill and popularity as a pipemaker when he and I were visiting the Provincial Museum in Edmonton. Eric [484]

[p.107-A]

was after dark when the last person danced with the sacred Pipe and returned it to the new Owner, bringing the transfer ceremony to a close. 778 796 432

HISTORY OF THE BACKSIDE-TO-THE-FIRE PIPE

Part of the Spirit dwelling within each sacred Bundle is the history of the Bundle and of those who formerly owned it and prayed with it. What I know of this Pipe I learned from my two Teachers, Atsitsina and Mokakin, each of whom had already kept that Bundle. 778 [115] [869]

It is called the Backside-to-the-Fire Pipe because the sacred Stems are placed within the Bundle in the direction opposite that of Pipes in other Bundles. Our other sacred Pipe Bundles must always hang on a west wall, facing Sun's first light from the east, and the Pipestems must be placed in the Bundle so that the mouthpieces point to the south, where the lodge fire is. But the tradition of the Backside Bundle calls for the mouthpieces to point North; thus the "backside" of the Pipes face the fire. This is according to spiritual directions given to the Pipe's first Keeper.

White Horn, an uncle of the ceremony's present leader, had been the first Blood man to own this Pipe. He had it transferred to him by Drum, a member of the Sarsi tribe. Although the Sarsi People belong to a different language group, they share a long alliance and dependence with our People, and have adopted most of our religious and cultural customs. Thus, their Medicine Pipe Bundles are similar to ours. The main Stem of the Bundle looks like a Medicine Pipe from the Crow People, so the Bundle may originally have come from them. [439] [425] [648]

White Horn had the Bundle for many years, and because he was so fond of it his family decided to bury it with him when he died. Before the burial, one of our head men, Day Chief, was instructed in a dream to take the main Pipe from [764] [787]

Few old Iniskims of this kind still exist, as they are usually buried with the persons who find them. [778] [769]

When a spiritual-looking stone was found, it was brought to a holy man or woman, who blessed it with a covering of sacred paint, sang the ceremonial songs, and, after thus endowing it, awarded this new Iniskim to the finder. [793]

Iniskim necklaces were commonly worn, especially by children. At ceremonies, our Old Man wore a bead-decorated one given to him in childhood by his grandfather, Owl Boy. He instructed us to keep Iniskims on our altar at camp, and while traveling to wrap them up in a layer of matted buffalo hair and keep them inside a rawhide bag. Such bags are usually square, with long fringes of buckskin along the sides, and decorations of colored geometric designs. These bags are usually large enough to hold most of a family's sacred articles—incense, paints, necklaces, feathers, smoking mixtures. [301] [237] [915]

The Old Man used to keep at his house a little earth-filled box that sat between his stove and rear wall. It was his altar for making incense. Inside it were several small Iniskims, each resting on a little cushion of buffalo hair. Some of the stones looked like standing persons; others resembled buffalo. One was simply a smooth, round pebble. All were covered with sacred red paint. [353] [237] [531]

[p-169-B]

Although I feel that everything has a Spirit, and that Spirits are everlasting, I have never particularly believed in "ghosts." I mention them because during my walk home I had an experience that seemed to involve them. This story explains why some of our People don't like to travel at night, especially alone. 123 [484]

For some time, as I walked along, I had the strange feeling I was being followed by something I could not see. I was walking near the edge of the prairie where it drops off to the Bullhorn River below. Suddenly I came to a deep gully that began out on the prairie and opened up into the river bottom. Rather than hike way around it I decided to go straight across, by going down it and then climbing back up. I started to trot downhill when I heard the sound of heavy breathing behind me. My heart grew large in my chest as I came to a quick halt and turned my head to look behind me. I heard one more heavy breath, which sounded as though it had come from something also trying to stop quickly. At that instant there was a thumping sound from behind me, and then a piece of cow dung rolled by and came to rest not far from where I had stopped. I strained my eyes until I was convinced that no person or animal was behind me, and then began singing some of my sacred songs to keep myself company while I continued homeward. The next day I learned from one of the Old People that near this place were several old open graves, and that few people walk past them at night because encounters with ghosts usually result. [775]

There are numerous open graves around the reserve. Most of them are pretty well scattered from the effects of nature. Open graves were usually made by placing a filled coffin or homemade box under a cutbank or next to some large rocks and boulders. Less often, the coffin was covered with a pile of rocks, or placed inside a specially built little cabin. Bodies were usually placed in open graves during epidemics, or by family members who did not believe in burial underground 764 766 [177]

[p. 227-B]

but were prevented by the government from placing the bodies on scaffolds or in trees. 766 [177]

According to tradition, the Spirits of our People go to a place called the Sandhills after the person's body dies. Good, bad, or indifferent as the person was when physically alive, so will the Spirit go on forever in the Sandhills. A deceased person's most cherished possessions were usually placed with the body, so that their Spirits could continue to be together. The same was true of a man's favorite horse. It was often shot by his grave. Favorite horses that were not killed often died of starvation while mourning the loss of their master. 775 [764] [231]

It is thought to take some time for a person's Spirit to leave the body completely and go on to the Sandhills. For that reason, a person would sometimes be brought back from death if he had unusual spiritual powers and had instructed a close friend or relative how to recall them. For the same reason, few people would touch a dead person or go near his burial ground, especially at night. It is said that a dead person's Spirit, or ghost, often tries to persuade others to accompany it. Widows who commit suicide by their husbands' graves are said to have been persuaded to join them on their way to the Sandhills. At the Sandhills it is said that life goes on much like here, only in Spirit. The Old Way of life is the one that goes on, of course. [761] [762]

Some of our People have slept by old graves in search of Power from the Spirits who may be there. I was once inspired to seek such Power. In my dream I was visited by a skeleton-man in a 769 787 123

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 229-A]
[P. 228-A]

764

A long ago burial in a tree along the Belly River. (National Museum)

[p. 228-B]

buckskin suit who suggested that I find my Power among living Spirits, not among those of the dead. The dream lasted for some time and convinced me that graves should be left in peace. Unfortunately, some people do not feel this way. They don't even have respect for the dead person's cherished belongings. 769 787 123

The place where I slept was the resting place of a large family that had passed away during an epidemic more than fifty years ago. Their coffins were inside two small cabins. Several ancient trunks and bedsteads were among the many belongings that rested between and under the stacks of coffins. Parts of skeletons, old clothing, and beads were scattered everywhere. Years ago, one of our mercenary people guided white collectors to the place, and they made off with guns, pipes, and large pieces of beadwork. In recent years, others have come and searched carefully for smaller, more valuable items. Some of these have ended up in various museums. The bone hunters came next, first carrying off all the skulls, then picking out other bones. Since my visit, someone made a final, insulting search, during which all the remaining contents of the cabins were tossed out the door. The responsible individuals could probably tell us some interesting stories about their encounters with the Spirits of those buried people. 764 177

I learned a few more things during my walk that night. For instance, rocks that lie unseen on the dark prairie are quite a hazard to moccasin-covered feet. Nor is it much fun to step into one of the many holes that lead down to the homes of foxes and badgers. In the Old Days, such holes brought tragedies to men, horses, and buffalo. A concentration of such holes is sometimes a warning for another danger on the nighttime prairie—silent cutbanks with drop-offs of a hundred feet or more into dark river bottoms. I also met a modern, silent danger our Old People didn't have to worry about—barbed-wire fences. 123 [164]

As I neared home, I wondered how it would be to steal up to an enemy camp and raid a horse

the official first name of Iniskim. Sometime later our old uncle said: "This boy has a legal name, but he has not yet been given a name in the Old Way. Myself, I am no longer using my young-man-name. Since you two are carrying the names of my father and mother, I give this little boy my own name. He will grow old like me, known as Atsitsina." 793 553

Each of our children will be able to call on the Old Man's Spirits with Iniskims—his were passed on to us, still sitting up in his old altar, where he put them. The rest of his holy things were placed in the grave with him. An old metal suitcase held his doctoring articles. A cloth bag contained his old, rawhide-covered drum. On top of the suitcase lay his two painted and carved canes. Thus his body went on its final journey. 793 [768] [764]

The Old Man's passing caused someone to look up his official birthdate on the records. It turned out that he was older than he had thought —his birth was recorded for the year 1877. He was the oldest man among all the Blackfoot People when he died. The next oldest was Guy Wolf Child, who passed away not long after. 793 165

A few months before the Old Man's passing, we had lost another one of our ceremonial leaders —old John Many Chiefs, or White Horns. His death came about the same time as that of Mrs. Mountain Horse, the lady who prepared medicinal herbs. Shortly after that came the death of White Horns' eldest son—Ray Many Chiefs, who 165

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 362-B]

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

721 778 Not long after making the vow, Bear Head, his brother Mad Wolf, and Skunk Cap joined a war party going to the far south to raid the horse herds of the Mexicans. In a fight that the party had down there with the Many Bracelets people (the Navajos), Bear [764] Head was mortally wounded. Before he died, his grieving brother [782] promised him that he would bury him with all of his possessions and, in the following summer, come back for the sacred bow-case and himself sacrifice it to Sun for the good of the tribe. So poor Bear Head died, and with some difficulty the party got his body and belongings up into a house of the ancient and vanished Cliff Dwellers and came home with the horses that they had taken from the Mexicans. Soon thereafter Skunk Cap left the Pikunis to go we knew not where.

Came spring again, the spring of 1846, and from some friendly Gros Ventres visiting in our camp we learned that Skunk Cap had wintered with their tribe and had recently gone on to the Cutthroats (Assiniboines) to organize a war party of them to raid the Mexicans —the Gros Ventres being against going that far on raids.

Cried Mad Wolf upon hearing this: "Ha! Raid the Mexicans, that cowardly Skunk Cap. No! He is southward going to steal my brave, dead brother's sacred otter bow-case. We must be off at once, get there first, or he will do it." And that got our medicine man and wise warrior, *Pinukwiim*, to organize a war party to hurry south to prevent the theft. This was a war party that I was glad to join for I wanted to see the far-south country and its strange tribes.

Some fights we had down there, some men we lost, and at last made camp one evening at the mouth of the canyon in which poor [769] Bear Head's body lay. Not for anything, not for one hundred head of horses would any of our companions have gone up to that place of the dead, so, just before dawn, Mad Wolf and I set out to get the sacred bow-case, should it still be there.

It was very dark in the narrow, high-walled canyon. We stole up it until opposite the great cave and its many ancient houses, and waited until dawn to see our way up into it. Then, climbing the narrow and dangerous trail, we heard the echoing thuds of falling rocks and sensed that there was someone in the cave. So there was. Skunk

The Baker Massacre

camp. The head chief of our camp of the Pikunis was Bear Chief better known as Heavy Runner. Our tribe was so very large that in order to hunt successfully, we were generally divided into a number of camps.

So now it was for me, only twelve summers old, to provide food for my mourning mothers and sisters and care for our band of horses, nearly a hundred head. We had a large, well-furnished lodge; my mothers and sisters were good workers. But my father's powerful many-shots gun had been buried with him. It was hard for me with my old cap-lock gun to kill enough buffalo for our food and other needs. But my mother encouraged me, saying that I must do my utmost to get well-furred buffalo cow hides for them to tan into soft robes, so that, come spring, I could trade them for a many-shots gun.

In the first moon of winter (November), when the new fur of the buffalo became full grown and dark, I hunted almost continuously, one or two of my family always accompanying me to help butcher my kills. All through the winter, even in the coldest weather, we kept at it, older hunters saying that they were astonished at my perseverance, and I so young. Always in our lodge robes were being tanned and fat meat was being dried or made into pemmican for our summer use. Came the New-Grass Moon (April) of summer, and we all moved in to Many-Houses (Fort Benton) and made camp. Next morning we loaded our fifty-five soft-tanned, head-and-tail buffalo cow robes on some horses, unloaded in front of Spotted Cap's (Charles Conrad's) trade house. Spotted Cap, followed by his three hands-out-goods men, came out to meet us, help us unload our many packs of robes and carry them inside. We loved Spotted Cap. He was married to Sings-in-the-Middle Woman, she a member of our brother tribe, the Bloods. He spoke our language, was very kind and generous. Already he had heard that I had taken my dead father's name, so said to me as he grasped my hand: "Bear Head, how happened it? Whose are they, these many robes?"

"My killings, my mothers' tannings. Spotted Cap, I want a many-shots gun and three hundred greased shooters for it," I answered. (The bullets of the .44 caliber, rim-fire cartridges for the Henry repeating rifle were heavily coated with hard grease, hence the Pikuni name for them.)

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

224 of its many streams and constantly depended upon them for their
173 living.

173 Then, we know not how long ago it was, a war party of the
177 Pikunis, traveling into the far south, the Always-Summer-Land,
492 made a very strange discovery, so very strange that they could hardly
[484] believe what they saw: enemies of some kind were riding animals (horses) as big as elk and leading others packed with their belongings. Said the leader of the party: "Elk-dogs! That is what those
721 strange animals are. My friends, we must have some of them."

492 Came night. Waiting until the enemies were asleep, the Pikuni
177 war party went to their camp, took many of the strange, useful
173 animals, and in time got safely back to their far-north people with
[484] them. At once war parties of all three of the tribes began going to Always-Summer-Land to obtain some of the elk-dogs. They took
177 them from different Indian tribes and from a different kind of white
173 men living there. Also, from some of those men that they killed they got strange weapons: very long big-knives (swords); long, iron,
[764] pointed spears; and iron shirts (shirts of mail). No doubt you remember that our friend Curly Bear, who died not long ago, had one of them that was taken by one of his far-back ancestors, and that it was buried with him. Well, the time came when our three tribes had so many elk-dogs that they no longer went into the Always-Summer-Land for more of them.

224 Our far-back fathers soon found that nothing was so exciting, so
492 satisfying as the running of a herd of buffalo with a fast, well-trained
173 elk-dog. With a good bow, a quiver of arrows, and such a horse, a
177 hunter could often select and kill ten or twelve fat cows in a single run. So was it that *piskans* were not used so much for obtaining plentiful supplies of meat and hides. Still, used they were, for, as some of the wise, old, Sun's men said, it was not right to let old and sacred customs die.

224 A favorite *piskan* of our Pikuni tribe was the one on the south side of Milk (Teton) River and just below Old Man Lying Butte (on Teton River, nine miles above Choteau, Montana, U.S. Highway 89). When I was in my eighth summer (approximately 1843), we Pikunis moved from Two Medicine Lodges River to camp, for my

30: Kehoe E-4,5 (1972-1975) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Cree NG4

gathering, almost always convened for another purpose such as powwow dancing, an announcement is made that a giveaway will be held "for So-and-So." The family of the honored person parades around the center of the arena, using the standard Plains dance step, while a Plains style honoring song (a recognized type) is drummed and sung. The honored person, if present, will parade in the front rank; if he or she is absent, ill or deceased, his photograph will be carried by someone in the front rank. When the honoring song is concluded, gifts piled into old quilts, bedspreads or cartons are carried into the center of the arena or a roped-off section at its side. The bulk of the gifts is blankets and other bedding. Assistants, often powwow officials, help the family distribute the gifts to individuals or categories of persons ("visitors from other tribes") determined in advance by the family. The giveaway usually fades to an end, the next activity of the gathering beginning as the last few gifts are taken.

Reasons for holding a giveaway range around the expectation that a change in an Indian's social position will be formally communicated to the active members of his or her band. A child's first explicit participation in ritual, including his first costumed powwow dancing, is marked by a small giveaway. Young people's moves into adult responsibilities — marriage, graduation from school, or return from military service — call for giveaways by their families. Unusual achievements bringing increased prestige, such as winning awards or notable positions, will be recognized by giveaways. Finally, death is memorialized by giveaways.

B C 431 534 796
B C [852] [884]
B C [565] [764]

37: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1944) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

of these Indians were full-bloods. A goodly number had more than one white grandparent. These Indians, with few exceptions, had become Christians – the great majority of them Roman Catholics. Even the oldest of the full-bloods who died during those years received Christian funerals at which a priest or minister officiated in the services in the church and at the cemetery. I served as a pallbearer in several of those services. Yet I noticed that after the white clergyman formally entrusted the body to the earth, it was customary for an aged Indian to step forward and deliver a fervent prayer in his own language, before the assembled mourners dispersed.

During those years no young men fasted and sought visions in isolated localities. There were no painted shields among these Indians, who had not gone to war against enemy tribes for more than a half century. Yet more than a score of veterans of the intertribal wars, their wives, or widows, were still living. They formed the nucleus of that portion of the tribe who gathered each summer to participate in the sun dance. There were nearly a score of painted lodges in the sun dance encampment behind the museum near Browning in 1942. Owners of medicine-pipe bundles still opened them in a ritual manner after the first thunder in spring; and the sacred horse medicine cult was still active. Older full-bloods still recited in fascinating detail the beautiful myths which told of the origins of the medicine bundles and religious rituals of the Blackfoot. Nearly a century after Father Point's pioneer Christian missionary endeavors among these Indians, traditional Blackfoot religion, such as was interpreted by that unnamed artist in 1847, was still very much alive.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to Holt, Rinehart and Winston of New York and to Loyola University Press, Chicago, for permission to reprint this plate.
2. This letter, as quoted by Father De Smet, is not dated, Presumably it was written in 1847 (Smet 1905: III: 953-54).

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40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

ETHNOLOGY.—*Stone "Medicine Wheels"—memorials to Blackfoot war chiefs.* HUGH A. DEMPSEY, Calgary, Alberta. (Communicated by John C. Ewers.)

121 764 [101] [172] Two stone "medicine wheels," which are still in existence on the Blood Indian Reserve in southern Alberta, Canada, offer excellent examples that the line between archeological and ethnological work is sometimes a fine one. For these two "medicine wheels"—and a third recently inundated by backwaters of St. Mary Dam—are not ancient markers whose significance is lost [124] in antiquity. Rather, they have been constructed within this century, and a summer's field work has revealed the date and ownership of the rings, the reason for their existence, and has enabled interviews to be made with individuals who actually participated in or witnessed their creation.

764 The Blackfoot "medicine wheel" consists of a circle of stones, or "tipi ring," with concentric lines of stones of varying lengths extending away from it in the four cardinal [172] directions. This pattern is similar to those described by Kehoe's informants (1954, pp. 133–34), although it differs from his Lowry, Mont., site which has ten such lines.

342 178 764 The tipi ring itself is common in Blackfoot country and has been used within the past two decades by at least two tribes of this nation (Blood and North Peigan) where the owner wished to follow early customs.

342 764 The tipi rings were aptly described in 1955 by One Gun, an elderly North Blackfoot informant: "The circles of stones were normally used to hold down the edges of the lodges. The old tipis were made of buffalo skins and were much heavier than the canvas ones. They could not be blown away as easily, so stones were able to hold them in place. But when we started to use canvas, we had to use pegs or our tipis would be blown over. Stones were also used between the pegs."

[127] Although many of these tipi rings have been destroyed in cultivated areas, some are still known to exist on the North Blackfoot Reserve in Canada, the Blackfoot Reservation in Montana, and on the Blood Reserve, where the writer has observed well over two dozen in casual traveling.

764 The Blackfoot term for the "medicine

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
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764 wheel" is *atsot-akeeh' tuksin*. The literal translation is: "from all sides" (*atsot*), "a small marker of stones" (*akeeh'*), "for posterity" (*tuksin*). It will be noted that the word merely designates the radiating lines and makes no reference to the tipi ring itself. This conforms with Blackfoot tradition that the lines were merely appendages to existing tipi rings, rather than the whole marker being constructed at one time.

[555] [729] According to informants, "medicine wheels" were used to mark the residence or grave of a warrior chief. There were apparently three such allied uses: for a tipi in which a warrior chief died and was buried; one in which he had been residing at the time of his death but which was not his burial place; and one which was used during his lifetime but not related to his death. Each may be a variation, or they may reveal a change in the use of these markers over the years.

764 173 [115] The earliest reference to a Blackfoot "medicine wheel" known to informants is credited to Bull Back Fat, a Blood chief who died in 1842. But, according to Jack Low Horn, a reliable Blood informant who supplied this data, the marker did not originate with this chief but "was started in the days when our people used dogs instead of horses." The informant told the following story:

"The use of this sign saved the life of the first Bull Back Fat.[1] The Bloods had been on a raiding party to the south and were returning home. In each camp, Bull Back Fat used these signs around his lodge. A party of enemy Crows discovered one of these camps and saw his marks. They had never seen them before and wondered what they meant, so they began to follow the trail of the Bloods. They found two deserted camps and arrived at the third shortly after the Bloods had left. Bull Back Fat and his wife were a few miles from this camp when they discovered that a colt

[1] There were at least five Blood chiefs named Bull Back Fat during the period 1830-1900 and each is remembered by some characteristic—i.e., the first Bull Back Fat, the short Bull Back Fat, the Bull Back Fat who was buried by women, etc.

[p.177-B]

764 173 had been left behind, so they returned to find it. When they came to a point overlooking the camp, the Crows saw the pair and waved to them. Escape was impossible, so Bull Black Fat rode down to meet them. Speaking in sign language, the Crows asked about the meaning of the stones. Bull Back Fat explained that these were used by a great warrior chief who was leading the party of Bloods; but he did not tell them that he was the chief. They became anxious to visit this man and Bull Back Fat agreed to lead them there under a pact of peace, but asked that his people have time to be prepared. He left the Crows and found the new camp where his lodge was placed in readiness for the visitors. When the party arrived, they were shown to Bull Back Fat's tipi. When they entered, they were surprised to meet the same man whom they had seen earlier. It was then they learned who he was and realized they had missed the opportunity of killing a great chief. . . ."

764 According to the informant, other tribes soon learned the meaning of the "medicine wheel" and it served a practical purpose, for the enemy was always hesitant about pursuing a camp which was led by a noted warrior. "Anyone passing one of these markers would know that a great warrior chief had camped there," he commented.

If this at one period was the common Blackfoot use of the "medicine wheel," it evidently underwent a change in the late nomadic period, for most modern informants consider these to be solely memorials or death markers. One Gun stated that "when a chief died, he was left in his tipi. After it had fallen down and rotted, anyone travelling past would know that a chief died there because of the radiating lines." Alternately, Rides at the Door, a Blood informant, said that "any stranger passing such a place would recognize that a chief

[P.178-A]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 178-B]

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
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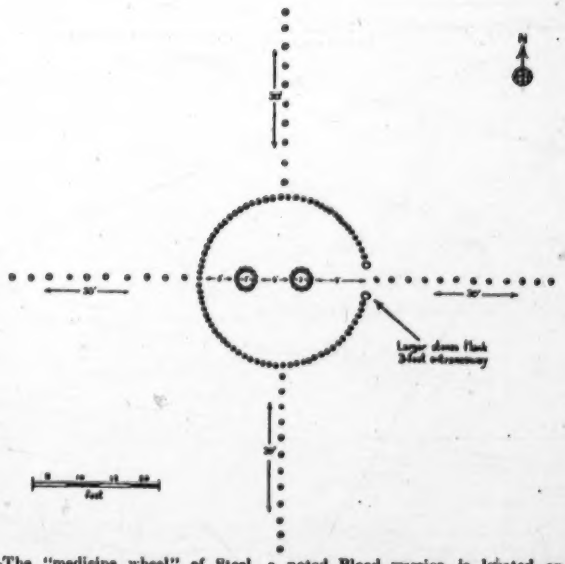

FIG. 1.—The "medicine wheel" of Steel, a noted Blood warrior, is located on the Blood Indian Reserve, southern Alberta, about 3 miles north of Spring Coulee. It is 27 feet in diameter at the circle with four 30-foot radiating lines. There were 77 stones used in the circle portion, and 14 each in the 3-foot fireplaces. This "medicine wheel" was constructed in April 1940, following the death of Steel.

[P. 178-B]

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

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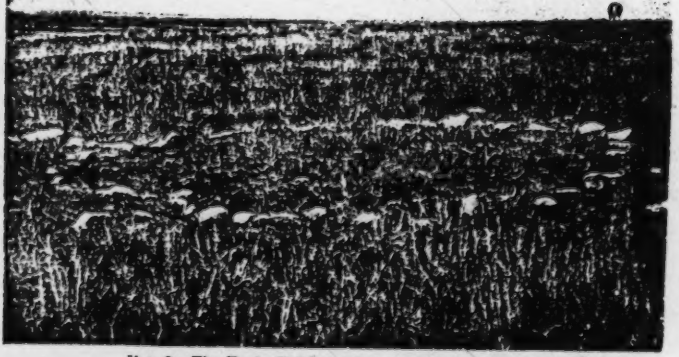

FIG. 2.—The Eagle Child "medicine wheel," looking northeast.

[p. 179-A]

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
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764 had died there, but the body would not be left there."

It is possible that these two distinct lines of thought are the result of Blackfoot mortuary customs. At times, particularly during plagues or when moving camp, a dead person was left in his sewn-up lodge. On other occasions, he was buried in the trees or on a scaffolding on a high hill. This variation possibly affected the use of the "medicine wheel," with the radiating lines being left at the death lodge if it was used, or at the tipi ring if the chief was buried elsewhere.

[766]

The Bloods and North Blackfoot know of several "medicine wheels" which were erected for warrior chiefs. Some of these markers are still in existence, but most have been destroyed by the inroads of civilization. One Gun knew of two wheels which he claimed were intact on the North Blackfoot Reserve, east of Calgary. He said that "at Blackfoot Crossing there is one for Little Medicine Pipe, a Blackfoot who died in the smallpox epidemic of 1869–70, and on Arrowwood Creek is one for Bad Head, a Blood chief." Another informant said that Many Spotted Horses, a noted Blood war chief who died in 1884, had a "medicine wheel" on the Blood Reserve near Whoop-

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[766]

[127]

[p.179-B]

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
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764 Up. A search revealed only this chief's tipi
172 ring, but the stones of his "medicine wheel,"
127 which were at an inaccessible point on Weasel Fat's Bottom, had reportedly been scattered. Local Indians had replaced the stones as much as possible, but it was felt that this interference limited the usefulness of this wheel for comparative study.

However, two existing "medicine wheels" belonging to other Blood warriors were closely examined, and data was obtained on a third ring which in 1950 was submerged by the backwaters of an irrigation dam project.

The two inspected were the "medicine wheels" of Steel (*Ski-mâtsis*, literally Fire Steel) and Eagle Child (*Péta-poka*), while the third belonged to Red Crow (*Mékaisto*). All these wheels were constructed during the present century and are likely the only ones made by the Blood tribe during that period. A similar "medicine wheel" has been credited to Running Wolf, a Blood chief who died in 1921, but conflicting stories tend to dispute the authenticity of the claim.

764 Of the three markers, Red Crow's is the earliest. It was made immediately following his death on August 28, 1900. Red Crow was head chief of the tribe from 1870 until

764 [015] his death and was one of the most influential men in the nation. An elderly informant, Mrs. Bruised Head, who was present at the event, provided the following description of the making of his "medicine wheel":

> "I was staying at Red Crow's tipi at the time. He went across the river to round up his horses and, when he didn't return, his wife, Long Time Singer, went to look for him. She found him laying on the gravel at the edge of the river. I saw her crying and we knew what had happened. We all went across with the Red Crow's wagon and brought his body over. Both religious denominations were at the funeral, together with many white people. When it was finished, we started to move camp. But before we left, we placed the markers on the four sides of his tipi ring. Red Crow had used pegs on his tipi, but also had stones between them. When the lodge was removed, the circle of stones was incomplete, so we took rocks from other tipi rings and completed it. Then we placed the four radiating lines. There was no ceremony; several of us in the family did it because it was the custom as far back as the days when we used dogs; they were just the marks of a warrior chief.
>
> "After this, we left the camp site. That night, Bull Horn, a minor chief, camped in the next bottom. He had not heard about Red Crow's death. Next morning he went to the camp site and when he saw the marks around Red Crow's tipi ring he began crying, for he knew that Red Crow was dead."

764 172 The second example is the Eagle Child wheel which was constructed in 1931 after this man's death. It is located about 150 feet west of his house on the Blood Reserve, and 1½ miles south-west of St. Paul's Anglican School. The tipi ring portion is 12 feet in diameter and contains 54 field stones ranging from four to 12 inches in diameter. [127] There are no hearth stones. When examined in the summer of 1955, the north and south lines contained six stones, the east line seven stones and the west line four stones. All extended in lines four to six feet in length and, by the spaces, would appear to have been disturbed by cattle or horses.

According to available information, Eagle Child had lived in his house, but moved to

764 his tipi shortly before his death in 1931. The
172 radiating lines were set in place by Francis Eagle Child following his father's death.

The most interesting "medicine wheel," from all aspects, is the memorial to Steel, a great Blood warrior. It is of the most classic design and the fact that it was constructed in 1940, probably makes it the most recent and last such stone marker.

Born in about 1850, Steel was an outstanding fighter against the Crow and Assiniboin and, although he never gained official chieftain status, he was held in this
[555] regard by his people. For his exploits, he
[354] became the owner of a 30-buffalo tipi and was permitted to have two fireplaces. Because these two points are reflected in his "medicine wheel" they should be briefly explained.

342 The average Blackfoot tipi contained 12
555 to 14 skins (Ewers, 1955, p. 131), but warriors who performed certain brave deeds were permitted to have tipis made of 30 buffalo skins. Because of its size and weight, such a lodge was said by informants to have been divided in half for moving, and was
[556] carried on two travois. Therefore, besides fulfilling the warrior requirements, the owner of such a tipi had to be fairly wealthy in horses. Some Bloods who owned these tipis were Seen From Afar, brothers Hind Bull and Fish Child, Packs His Tail, and Holy Sleeps. Naturally, a 30 buffalo tipi was far larger at the base than the average tipis, and this size is immediately evident when inspecting certain tipi rings or "medicine wheels."

555 If a Blackfoot owner of a 30 buffalo tipi
354 carried his bravery and heroism to an even greater degree, he might become one of the select few to possess twin fireplaces. To gain this envied prize, a warrior had to perform some outstanding *coup* of a double nature. For example, an early Blood chief, Big White Child, knocked two enemy from the same horse—one from each side. Steel, according to an informant, gained twin fireplaces when he killed two Crow Indians in a singularly brave action.

[778] The fireplace nearest the doorway was apparently used for everyday purposes, while the one to the west was reserved for

555 [779] burning incense associated with a medicine pipe held by twin fireplace owner.

[354] Informants knew of only five Bloods who had possessed both 30 buffalo tipis and twin fireplaces. These were the first Bull Back Fat, Tail Feathers Coming Over the Hill, Big White Child, Many Spotted Horses, and Steel. Even Seen From Afar, remembered by the Bloods as their greatest chief, had not performed the "dual" exploits necessary to gain this honor.

764 [555] [729] Therefore, Steel's final memorial—a 30 buffalo tipi ring, with twin fireplaces, and flanked with four radiating lines—would appear to be the greatest tribute that could be paid a Blackfoot warrior chief.

In his later life, Steel was a progressive Indian who lived in a log cabin, built corrals, and owned cattle and horses. Early in [777] [575] 1940, shortly before his death, he pitched his large canvas tipi (of 30 buffalo size) a short distance south of his home, in preparation for a meeting of the Horn Society—a secret organization which guides the religious life of the reserve. Although he used pegs, he also obtained stones to hold the canvas in place. Following the meeting, Steel showed his son, Bob, how to lay out the four directional lines.

Steel died at Standoff on April 7, 1940, and was buried on a hill near the Belly Buttes. His son, assisted by his sister, Mrs. Laurie Plume, then completed the "medicine wheel" in accordance with his father's last wishes.

[555] [729] "The lines signify that he was a brave man, a leader who had been to war," stated his daughter. "It was Steel's wish to have this done as a proper tribute to a warrior chief." She added that, if he had not been entitled to it, the elders of the tribe would have quickly ordered the stones removed, as they were jealous of undeserved honors.

764 172 The Steel "medicine wheel" is located on the Laurie Plume farm, three miles north of Spring Coulee and about three-quarters of a mile from St. Mary River.

The tipi ring portion is 27 feet in diameter (compared to Eagle Child's 12-foot ring) and contains 77 field stones. There is a three-foot entrance to the east which is flanked by two larger stones. The concentric lines are all 30 feet in length, with the stones

764 172 evenly spaced. The north and west lines contain 10 stones while the south and east lines contain 12 each.

The double fireplaces are both three feet in diameter and each contains 14 stones. The everyday fireplace is nine feet from the east entrance, while the ceremonial fireplace is six feet in either direction from the west edge of the ring and from the other fireplace.

[127] There is no doubt that this "medicine wheel" was carefully prepared and, when it was visited in 1955, it was overgrown with grass but was reverently treasured by Mr. and Mrs. Plume. Because the tall grass could not be cleared away, it was impossible to properly photograph the entire ring.

Evidence that Steel did not vary the general size of the circle, fireplaces or entrance, was obtained when two informants stated that the first twin fireplace tipi ring constructed by Steel was still in existence in the Standoff area. By checking winter counts, the date of this ring was set at 1883.

When found after considerable searching, this tipi ring was seen to be almost identical with the "medicine wheel," with the exception that it did not have the radiating lines. It had the same diameter, the entranceway was the same size, and there was only slight variation in the size of one fireplace. The only major difference was that the fireplaces appeared to be closer to the east entrance by some 3 feet. There was no doubt that this ring was older than the "medicine wheel" as all stones were deeply imbedded in the soil, some being level with the surface.

There was one point about "medicine wheels" upon which all informants were in unanimous agreement: the radiating lines had no religious or symbolical significance.

[801] The number "four" is a sacred one among the Blackfoot and often occurs in religious ceremonies and traditional tales. But all agreed that no such symbolism applied here or, if it ever had, all knowledge of it is forgotten. The reply of informant Rides at the Door is typical: "There is no symbolical meaning to the four lines; they just denote his status as a warrior chief."

764 Upon existing evidence, it would appear that the use of Blackfoot "medicine wheels"

40: Dempsey H-4,5 (1955) 1956
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764 are relatively recent. Informants knew of only two such markers which they could not immediately identify. One was near Red Crow's wheel and was thought to have been much older, while the other was on Sun Dial Hill (Kehoe, 1954, p. 134) and is recorded only through the Geological Survey of 1882-83-84. However, the title, *Onoka-katzi* used by surveyor G. M. Dawson to describe the site, likely means "Elk Shirt" (*Ponoka-sokaxsin*), which was believed by informants to have been the name of a mid-nineteenth century chief of the North Blackfoot.

Because it has been possible only to study "medicine wheels" located on the Blood Reserve and interview informants from the Blackfoot nation, no attempt has been made to carry this study beyond the region
[171] of the stated territory. "Medicine wheels," of a type, have been mentioned at Lowry, Mont., by Kehoe, and in the Big Horn Mountains east of Lovell, Wyo., by Mulloy, (1954, pp. 54–55), but further research would be necessary to ascertain if there is any relationship between these, and the relatively recent markers of the Blackfoot. Also field work among the Crow, Assiniboin, Gros Ventre, or other Northern Plains Indians might determine if this custom was familiar to tribes other than the Blackfoot.

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and decoration. It is said that the fastest Piegan beadwork, in the late years of the use of "real beads," required nearly three weeks to complete a man's shirt, leggings and moccasins. In the more recent seed bead period women have been known to work months on a suit. Such a suit was worn only in ceremonials or on other special occasions, and was carefully preserved so that the owner might be buried in it.

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Decoration of Robes and Blankets

Some buffalo robes, worn by wealthy men or women on dress occasions, were decorated with porcupine quills in narrow, parallel bands running the long dimension of the hide, about a foot apart. There was generally a block of red quills in the center of each line flanked by sections of quillwork in other colors. A robe of this kind also had a triangle of quillwork about eight inches high, pointing inward from each of the hind leg areas of the hide. This robe known simply as "quilled robe." It was valued at more than two horses.

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Bands of quillwork or beadwork formerly were placed along the centers of buffalo robes or blankets. These bands generally were divided at intervals in their length by rosettes. (See Page 64)

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Decoration of Containers

Many soft skin containers made in the last 75 years by the Blackfeet have been decorated with beadwork. It is not known to what extent quillwork was formerly used on these articles. In the decoration of small containers such as awl cases and paint pouches the beaded designs are composed generally of stripes, elaborated by transverse bars. The typical Blackfeet pipe and tobacco pouch was formerly decorated with geometric designs. Those made in late buffalo days generally employed mountain designs and stripes in the pattern of the nearly square beaded area immediately above the fringe. Later flowered patterns were extensively employed on these soft skin pouches.

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[P·48-B]

42: Kehoe A,G-4,5 (1953, 1956) 1960
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

occasional artifacts in them, and one was discovered in the ring excavated by the writer. Many times the rings are in the vicinity of buffalo drive sites; a Blackfoot informant, Bull Head, stated that his people were accustomed to camp near their drives.

(5) "In the Dakotas, some are merely circular depressions in the sod." Maximilian reports observing the use of sod to hold down the lodge covers of the Blackfoot at Fort McKenzie, where suitable stones are lacking.

(6) "Rarely . . . are the remains of fires found in them." Rock concentrations as well as rock-lined fire hearths are frequently found in the center of tipi rings. Native informants, however, recall that cooking was often done outside the lodge. As for the remains of the fire itself, buffalo dung used as fuel would produce a slow, consuming fire leaving very little ash. Furthermore, the wind would be strong enough, in most cases, to remove all ash and charcoal remains—that charcoal which is found is usually a small amount caught under the hearth rocks. (Local ranchers have mentioned that many times, on the day after one on which they have branded cattle, they can find no traces of the branding fire.) Finally, that cooking was commonly done at the buffalo drives, rather than in camp, is evidenced by the charcoal and ash midden built up at these drive sites.

(7) "They lack packed floors." The tipi ring tested for this feature revealed a hard layer at the base of its rocks, which may possibly have been a floor. However, the nature of the sod on the Reservation (like that of much of the Great Plains) is such that packed earth is unlikely to result from relatively short occupancy of an area. At the 1956 Blackfoot encampment, the interiors of the tipis were marked by grass less packed than that outside the lodges.

(8) "They are situated on high river terrace fingers and less frequently in sheltered lowland areas." On the Blackfeet Reservation, tipi rings are found in all topographic settings favorable for camping. Historical and native sources indicate that the Indians lived in the sheltered lowlands in winter, but in spring were forced up on the terraces by flooding. It should also be remembered that tipi rings are very difficult to discover in the brush of the low valleys, and are in greater risk of destruction, from settlers as well as from floods.

(9) "They may be related to so-called 'medicine wheels.'" This topic is discussed in detail in another paper (Kehoe, 1954; see also Dempsey, 1956). Although no medicine wheels occur on the Blackfeet Reservation, they are found in north-central Montana and in Alberta. They can be defined as cairns or circles of stones, from the center of which radiate a number of rows of other stones. Elderly Blackfoot state that they mark the grave or place of death of esteemed members of the tribe, and this is substantiated by historical accounts. Tipi

42: Kehoe A,G-4,5 (1953, 1956) 1960
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rings are thus "related" to medicine wheels solely by having been used as weights for the cover of the death lodge, and subsequently forming the basis of the construction of a marker, or "wheel."

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Mulloy is further confused by circles of mixed stone and posts, which he encountered in the Yellowstone region (1952, p. 132; 1954, p. 55). These structures are conical, semiconical, rectangular or pentagonal in shape, often supported by trees or cliffs, and constructed of both stone and wood, in toto suggesting an entirely different type of structure from the weighted conical skin tipi. Mulloy believes (1954, p. 55) that "these structures may account for the origin of the prevailing myth in this region that 'tipi rings' have hearths in them, but they are by no means the same thing as the circles."

The 1954 report documents Mulloy's investigation of two "stone circle sites" in the Shoshone Basin, Wyo.[22] In one, containing 75 rings from 11 to 24 feet in diameter, situated on a flat-topped gravel terrace, he mapped and photographed the site and tested one circle by coordinate trenches 2½ feet wide and 3 feet deep. Another ring was tested by being completely excavated to the level of the gravel terrace. In addition, a second site of six rings was investigated but not excavated. The conclusions Mulloy derives from this work are that "stone circles" are still "manifestations of problematical purpose," similar in their occurrence along the eastern edge of the Rockies from New Mexico north to the Canadian border, and that "they might be circles used in dancing, or in other religious rituals" (Mulloy, 1954, p. 55), which may possibly be connected to the "medicine wheel" in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming. In sum, Mulloy adduces no new reasons for denying the domestic function of tipi rings as lodge-cover weights, though he is still committed to a belief in an inscrutable esoteric use for the circles, and therefore the rebuttal of his 1952 argument continues to be valid.

A second student of tipi rings, Hoffman, begins his review by cautioning, "In form and use they must be distinguished from somewhat similar structures such as medicine wheels, eagle catches, the Scotah Love Dance circle, and Koyokee pits" (Hoffman, 1953, p. 1), but later refers to all of these together as "tipi ring forms" (op. cit., p. 10 ff.). Failure to clear the confusion results from his superficial

[22] In a letter dated October 4, 1955, with photographs enclosed, Mr. William McCarty of Laramie, Wyo., sent me a description of a group of tipi rings in southeastern Wyoming (120 miles southeast of Mulloy's study). He wrote: "This group of tipi rings is located on a high bluff with a sheer drop to the west and north and a gradual slope to the east and west (sic). From the high point one can see for miles in any direction. This bluff is located eight miles south of Medicine Bow, Wyoming. . . . These rings seem to be in groups of three to six and are scattered around the level areas. . . . Rings are about eighteen feet in diameter and are formed of a double ring of stones. . . . At each group is a smaller ring of stones with a fire hole in the center of each. . . . My wife found a broken arrowhead and my daughter a smaller broken one. Some flints I have picked up show they were worked on and may be crude arrowheads."

42: Kehoe A,G-4,5 (1953, 1956) 1960
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Blackfeet Reservation vicinity were used as lodge-cover weights, or "tipi rings."

The extension of the use of tipi rings as lodge-cover weights to the northern Blackfoot range in Alberta is corroborated by information recorded by Dempsey (1956, p. 177):

> The tipi ring . . . is common in Blackfoot country and has been used within the past two decades by at least two tribes of this nation (Blood and North Peigan) where the owner wished to follow early customs.
>
> The tipi rings were aptly described in 1955 by One Gun, an elderly North Blackfoot informant: "The circles of stones were normally used to hold down the edges of the lodges. The old tipis were made of buffalo skins and were much heavier than the canvas ones. They could not be blown away as easily, so stones were able to hold them in place. But when we started to use canvas, we had to use pegs or our tipis would be blown over. Stones were also used between the pegs."

Dempsey also notes that the Blackfoot word for "medicine wheel" refers only to the radiating lines, the speaker thus assuming that the listener knows, as is inherent in Blackfoot tradition, according to Dempsey, that the lines are "merely appendages to existing tipi rings" (ibid.).

Granting, then, that the question of the function of tipi rings has been answered, at least for the area inhabited by the Blackfoot, problems of cultural affiliation and age still remain for these archeological features. Solutions rest partly on knowledge of the changes in size of the tipis during protohistoric and historic times, and of the size and arrangement of the camps.

For example, Anthony Hendry observed in 1754, while journeying through the Blackfoot country, near the present Calgary, Alberta, a camp which in his description invites comparison with archeological sites (Bushnell, 1922, p. 25):

> Came to 200 tents of Archithinue Natives, pitched in two rows, and an opening in the middle; where we were conducted to the Leader's tent; which was at one end, large enough to contain fifty persons; where he received us seated on a clear [white] Buffalo skin, attended by 20 elderly men. . . . I departed and took a view of the camp. Their tents were pitched close to one another in two regular lines, which formed a broad street open at both ends.

Matthew Cocking, sent west by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1772, writes of this tribe's camp arrangement in connection with a buffalo pound (Bushnell, 1922, p. 26): "Our Archithinue friends came to see us and pitched a small distance from us; on one side the pound 21 tents of them, the other seven are pitched another way." On the Reservation, tipi rings are found associated with buffalo drive sites in similar arrangements. A cluster of nine was located within a few hundred feet and on each side of a buffalo drive site, as diagrammed in figure 35 (see also pls. 49, *a*; 54, *a*).

Deductions on the size of the tipi may be made from observations such as those collected by Lieutenant Bradley from white traders

48: Bushnell A-4 (no date) 1927 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

000 were discovered more than half a century ago, is reproduced in Plate 7.

Unfortunately, the photograph which is shown in Plate 8 has not been identified. It belongs to the collection in the National Museum, but when and where made is not known. As it reveals the custom of the Northern Cheyenne, the burial scaffold may be regarded as having been erected by some members of that tribe. The supports of the scaffold at the corner nearest the position of the camera had fallen, thus allowing the scaffold with its burden to sag and to reveal more clearly the mass which rested upon the platform. One body had evidently been wrapped and placed within a travois basket, closely resembling and suggesting the example in the collection of the National Museum. One or more bodies, in addition to that in the travois basket, may have been on the platform. The six buffalo skulls had undoubtedly been placed upon the ground, near the scaffold, for some well-defined purpose or reason.

Blackfoot Confederacy

619 The allied tribes who formed this confederacy were the Siksika,
648 or Blackfeet proper; the Kainah, or Bloods; and the Piegan. Asso-
131 ciated with these were the Atsina, one of the divisions of the Arapaho. The habitat of these comparatively numerous tribes was the rugged, mountainous region about the headwaters of the Missouri, with the adjacent plains—a region where game was plentiful, where the deep valleys offered protection against the rigors of the long winters, and where their enemies would seldom penetrate. During the earlier days of their contact with Europeans some bands of the confederated tribes dominated the region as far north as the Saskatchewan.

764 Maximilian, who came in contact with these tribes during the summer of 1833, wrote regarding the customs of the people at the time of the death of one of their number: "When a Blackfoot dies, they do not bury him in the ground if they can avoid it, but sew him up in a buffalo robe, dressed in his best clothes, his face painted red, but without his weapons, and lay him in some retired place, in ravines, rocks, forests, or on a high, steep bank, and often cover the body with wood or stones, that the wolves may not get at it. [431] Frequently, when they cannot find a solitary spot, the corpse remains above ground in a kind of wooden shed, and they were often obliged to bury it, or to give it to the Whites as a desirable present, 765 which cannot be refused. The relations cut off their long hair, smear it, as well as their faces and clothes, with whitish-grey clay, [304] and, during the time of mourning, wear their worst clothing. Often, 775 too, they cut off a joint of a finger. They believe the dead go into

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another country, where they will have lack of nothing; and that they have often been heard when they were summoned to smoke a pipe together. At the funeral of rich Indians, several horses are often killed upon the spot; and we were told of instances when twelve or fifteen horses were killed in this manner at the funeral of a celebrated chief . . . The relations assemble at the residence of the deceased, and even the men lament and wail. The corpse is generally buried on the first day, and in case of death during the night, it is removed on the following morning." (Maximilian, pp. 258–259.) He likewise referred briefly to the treatment of the sick: "The medicine men or physicians of the Blackfeet are very unskilful. We always saw them take water in their mouths, which they spit out over the wounded . . . Drums and rattles (schischikue) were daily used in their attendance on the sick, in the closed tent . . . These Indians have some efficacious remedies derived from the vegetable kingdom, one of which is a whitish root from the Rocky Mountains, which is called, by the Canadians, rhubarb, which is said to resemble our rhubarb in its effect and taste, and likewise to act as an emetic. Another root is esteemed to be a powerful remedy against the bite of serpents. In all cases they have recourse to the drum and the rattle, and have great confidence in the intolerable noise caused by those instruments. The Blackfeet make their rattles of leather, wood, or bladder." (Op. cit., p. 258.)

The burial and mourning customs of the Blackfeet were interestingly described by another observer a few years later: "The Blackfeet do not place their dead on scaffolds but either in a hole well covered to keep off the wolves, or they leave them in the lodge with everything just as it is when they die. In that case the wolves of course eat their bodies very soon; and I am told that in this way the body of nearly every Blackfoot is disposed of. When one of them is in mourning he puts white earth on his head and goes out before his lodge wailing most piteously; as soon as the neighbors see that they all rush to his lodge and take it and everything it contains, leaving him nothing but his horse. The death of a relation is therefore a very serious affair, since a man loses all his property as well as his friend." (Culbertson, p. 126.)

The two preceding accounts contain rather conflicting statements, but they may refer to different groups of the Blackfoot confederacy. Possibly the tribal customs have undergone a change within a comparatively short time. This would be suggested by the following quotation: "Their manner of burial has always been (until recently) to inclose the dead body in robes or blankets, the best owned by the departed, closely sewed up, and then, if a male or chief, fasten in the branches of a tree so high as to be beyond the reach of wolves, and then left to slowly waste in the dry winds. If the body was

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that of a squaw or child, it was thrown into the underbrush or jungle, where it soon became the prey of the wild animals. The weapons, pipes, &c., of men were inclosed, and the small toys of children with them. The ceremonies were equally barbarous, the relatives cutting off, according to the depth of their grief, one or more joints of the fingers, divesting themselves of clothing even in the coldest weather, and filling the air with their lamentations. All the sewing up and burial process was conducted by the squaws, as the men would not touch nor remain in proximity to a dead body." (Yarrow, p. 161.) The preceding notes were prepared by John Young at the Blackfoot Agency, and tell of conditions as they existed some 50 years ago, but it is doubtful if he was acquainted with local customs of the more distant villages, where the older methods of disposing of the dead may still have been practiced.

Another and what is intended to be a general account of the burial customs of these tribes written only a few years later is very interesting as it contains references to certain customs not mentioned by other writers. It begins: "Their funeral and burial ceremonies indicate their belief in the immortality of the soul. These forms are of a similar type among all the tribes composing the nation. They place their dead, dressed in gaudiest apparel, within a tent, in a sitting posture, or occasionally fold them in skins and lay them on high scaffolds out of the reach of wild beasts, under which the relatives weep and wail. The arms and horses are buried with them, to be used in the long journey to the spirit land, showing the possession of the idea of the dual nature of matter and spirit." (Robinson, pp. 193–194.) And the same writer continues and relates a curious custom following the death of a child: "Immediately upon its decease, the whole village rush into the lodge and take possession of whatever portable property they can seize upon, until the grief-stricken parents are stripped of all their worldly possessions, not even excepting their clothing. The only method of evading the custom is to secrete the most valuable property beforehand, generally a matter difficult of accomplishment." (Op. cit., p. 194.) Evidently the death of a child caused much sorrow among the people, and as told by one who was well acquainted with the ways of life of Blackfeet: "Late one afternoon as I was pursuing my way through the outskirts of the camp, I heard a low sad wail, and on looking up, saw a poor woman meanly clad, the beautiful garments of yesterday having been taken from her. Her legs from the knees to the feet had been gashed with a knife and the blood was clotted upon them. Her hair had been cut off, and one of the fingers on the left hand had been severed at the first joint. A piece of wood lay in the palm of the injured hand, the clotted blood was mingled with ashes, which had been sprinkled over

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it. I spoke to her and she pointed to a tree, where hidden within the branches lay a little bundle, the darling of her bosom, recently dead. She turned from me and sang her coronach, mentioning the name of her babe and calling upon it to come back to her. Deeply and tender these Indian mothers love their children, and no suffering is too great for them to bear on their behalf." (Maclean, p. 66.)

In the same account is a reference to the placing of the dead "in the crotches of trees, or raised platforms, and in lodges," the latter probably resembling the similar form of burial as mentioned among the Crow and Oglala. The writer whose work has just been quoted continues and gives a brief description of the treatment of the sick, and likewise of conditions that exist after death. He says: "When anyone is sick a part of the garments of the sick person is placed upon the top of the lodge, that being shaken by the wind the prairie spirits may be induced to stop upon their journey, and the medicine man earnestly performs his incantations and giving of medicines, assisted by the friends of the sick person, and the gods, listening to the prayers, will aid in the overthrow of the evil genius which dwells in the body. During a severe time of sickness in one of the camps, as I sat beside the medicine man in one of the lodges, a large number of children were brought in, and the medicine man, taking the dress from the top of the lodge, rubbed the children's persons with it, as a protection against the attack of the disease. When anyone dies, he is said to have gone to the Sand Hills.

"The people are afraid of the spirits of the dead, and at once they remove the lodge, and sometimes even tear down the house, lest the spirit of the deceased return and inflict injury upon the living. They believe that the spirits of the dead hold communion with each other, and require food and clothing like the living, only as they are spiritual, they need the spiritual part, and not the material, for their sustenance. (Op. cit., p. 67.)

Arapaho

The ancient habitat of the Arapaho, before they reached the open prairie lands to follow the buffalo, was probably in the timbered regions northeast of the Minnesota River.

The Atsina, a division of the Arapaho more closely connected with the Blackfeet, were usually mentioned by the early narrators as the Gros Ventres of the Prairies, and as such they were alluded to by Maximilian. The latter wrote during August, 1833: "The Gros Ventres des Prairies . . . In the main, their customs agree with those of the Blackfeet, and they dispose of their dead in the same manner." (Maximilian, p. 234.)

[pp. 14-86 not processed]

53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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A'ikakaißχtoàii nánaiks. Autakúsi itáiksuo. Itáiksistauaχkautseiau. Initúiks auaχkápiaiau. Ponokß'mitaiks itáikitatsìmaiau. Akótsàpsiks ánniksaie, áukìnaiau okóauaists. Atsóaskuists itástsakokìuatßχp. A'nnimaie itáipstsìau, itsínitaχpiau. O'tàsoàuaiks itáutsinitaii, ki ámo otßχkanúinaaauaists itâ'χkanaipstoχtoχpi. O'tàsoauaiks kátaiinitaìks â'χkanaiàminitàii. Oksístoauaiks ámoks otsanáukitsoàuaiks áikàkiaiks. Ki otoχkémanoauaiks matakákekitsâχsìau. O'takemoàuaiks matakúkekitsâχsìau. Oχká'toauaists áiistsinimiau. Otokß'noauaists ákaχkspaiau. Omá nèpúmiu kánnaie itsítokomàukoχkuyim. U'nni omám initáuaχm saχkínauaχm kaiistoχsìnai. A'psists iχ'tsikáistoχsìnai. Manistákimatoχkoyìpi, omá nínau otoksínaists mátaiistsinim. Nítsamanistoχkitau. O'mani initáuaχm otoχpóksìmiks nitúyi iχ'kanánistaikimatoχkoyìmi.

They put their robes on the lodges, on high where the lodge-poles were tied together. They [the Peigans] continued to fight during the day. They [the women] only heard the sound of the guns. The guns were only heard. In the evening they would stop. Then they quit fighting. The dead were taken home. They [the] dead were laid across on horses. They put the rich ones inside of their own lodges. In the forests their lodges were put up. There they were put inside, when they were killed. Their horses [the horses of the dead] were killed [near them, that they might accompany their masters], and all the things that belonged to them were put in there [in the lodges]. All their horses, that were not killed, had their tails and manes cut. Their mothers had their little fingers chopped off. And their wives had also their little fingers cut. Their sisters had also their little fingers cut. They [the women] would cut their legs [just skin-deep]. They would cut off their hair. The widow suffered most [of all]. The father of the dead married man stuck himself. He stuck himself with arrows. That he might suffer more, that man would cut also his upper-legs. He had his hair all cut off. The companions of the dead one all suffered in the same way.

A'itapistutsiu Kyáiesisaχtàii. Ki omíksi manikâ'piiau itanínau: Aχkúnisâuop. Támaniau: A'. Itomátapitsikiniau. Támanistsìau óta-

They [the Peigans] moved to Maria's river [Bear creek]. And there would be some young men saying: Let us go on a raid.

A [Erratum: this should read [the dead]--Analyst]

áuniaie áipotoyiu otoχkéman. Itstsíi apatóχtsik áuaχsoàiks, ánnyaie noχkanistâχkâχkèmiau. A´nnikskaie, nitáuaniχ´pinan, makápitapì.

her out of doors. He would take back what he had given for presents. When people took back what they had given for presents, that meant, [that] one was giving up his wife. There were in the olden times people who took their wives by force, that was the way, they got a wife. Such ones, we said, were bad people. 539 586 539 583

[Cf. Grinnell blt 211 sqq., Mc Clintock ont 184 sqq., Wissler slbi 9 sqq.]

Death and hereafter.

Omík apatóχts áioχtoχkoχsiks nápiiks ki ómaχkàkèks áisokìnakìi. Stsíkiks istókimatsists iχ´táisokìnakìi. A´iniχ´koχtoχsiau, ki áistokimaiau. Ki stsíkiks áisimistsii. Istsínis omá áioχtoχkoχsiua, imoiániks ki makokísts itáumopistau. Mistákskuists itáikitsiχ´tsau. Saiístakskus, ataχsiksímiks itâ´χkitsisksipistàu. A´nnye nitáiìkiχ´taaii saipáiitapiks. A´uke nínaiks ki nínaipokàiks óχtoχkoχsisàu, áukisokìnaiau. Inísau, itáiìaksinaiàu nínaiks. Auápâχsoiotokâ´nisokàsimiau. Matsóniks nitáiauistàpsi. Stsíkiks amáuχkèsani iχ´táuχpuskinàii. Stsíkiks otaχkúyi iχ´táuχpuskinàii. Manikâ´piis, omá iniun nitáyi nitáinau. Akékoanàsis, áuakàsiua osókàsimi. B´annokâχpekinasiuaie. Omím otsítsìniχ´piau, okónaui itáiakokeuntoχp, áipstsokapistu-

Long ago old men and old women doctored the sick persons [even nowadays such doctoring is practiced]. Some of them doctored with drums. They sang to themselves, and beat the drum. And some doctored by giving something to drink. If the sick person died, he was wrapped into buffalo-robes and cow-skins. He was put up aloft [on top of] the mountains. When there were no mountains, he was tied to bent trees. That was the way, [that] common people were buried. And when the chiefs and the chiefs' children got sick, they were doctored by everybody. When they died, the chiefs were dressed up [in their finest clothes]. They wore shirts of weasel-tails and human hair. Their leggings were just the same [weasel-tails and 539 755 539 764

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5384 7644 tsix´p. Omá nínau ki omá manikâ´piu aistótaχpapistoaiau. Nitúyi omá akékoan nitáiχ´tsaù. Itâipststsàiau, mátastaχkiχ´tsàniks. Nitáuaniχ´pinan „ikímaua", ánninitstsàiaiks.

human hair]. Some of them had scarlet paint all over their faces. Some others had yellow paint all over their faces. When it was a young man, the dead person was dressed the same way. When it was a girl, her dress was buckskin. It was with elk-teeth. There where they died, their lodge was put up; it was fixed up inside [just as if people were going to live there]. A man and a young man had willow-pillows put on each side of them [one at the head, and one at the feet]. The same way a girl was laid down. They were put in the lodge, their faces were not covered up. We said [in the case of] those, that were laid that way, „a dead man's lodge".

5389 7715 Akóχtsik nímoχtsistapitapiiχ´pinaniks nitáuanikinan, inióki, omí apátoχsòχtsi ánnimaie aitapáuop, ánistoχp O´maχkspatsikùi. A´nnoχk ómaχksimiks áisakiaûanìau, aitapáuosi O´maχkspatsikùi. A´uanìau, amó otsistáuosin áuauàkimatsiu einí. A´uakasiks itstsíi, ki mí'nists akauóyi, ki ámoi nitáuatoχpinànists itsiniákauòyi. Ikáitamapsiiχ´k omám otsistáuosina. Okánistauamotsiiχ´pi. Ki ámoia otátoapinànists okánistaiχ´tsiχ´pi. Kénnyaie nâ´χkanistaitsinikòko.

Our ancestors, from long times ago, used to tell us, that, when we die, there is [a place] over there in the north, [where] we go to, [which] is called the „Big Sand-hills". Now the old people still say, that we go to the Big Sand-hills. They say, [that] these ghost-people are chasing buffalo. Antelopes are there, and the berries are plentiful, and the things that we eat are plentiful. The ghost-people have a happy time. They still invite each other. And all their holy things are still there. That is how I am told about them.

[Cf. Grinnell blt 193 sq. 273. 44 sq. 62. 94. 127 sqq. 132 sqq., Wissler-Duvall mbi 163, Mc Clintock ont 148 sqq. 164 sq.]

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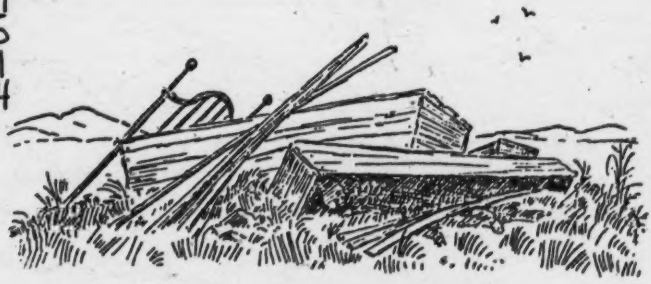
795 and Blackfoot religious ceremonies back to back, and if a Blackfoot
793 religious article slips into the grave at a good Catholic funeral, and if the grave is decorated not with flowers but with yard goods, blankets, tobacco or children's toys, the good Father does not see these things. His concern is with lives and with souls, not with gestures, and perhaps this is one of the reasons that all the Blackfoots, of whatever religious belief, hold him in such high regard.

Volumes could be written about Father Mallman, but I think that a single anecdote of recent occurrence will suffice. It is no secret that
● [764] when an elderly "long-hair," a member of the Father's congregation, was laid to rest with Catholic rites a few years ago, a horse was killed in the man's honor (an ancient Indian gesture of respect for the deceased). And when some sanctimonious grimalkin came tattling to Father Mallman about the horse, the Father's only comment was that he hoped it had been a very good horse because the deceased had been a very good Catholic.

793 I think that the basically syncretistical attitude of the Blackfoot
197 toward Christianity—an attitude which *must* be understood if one is to achieve any real understanding of the Indian himself—is well
[123] expressed in a story which the Chief told me four years ago, after he had adopted me as his son. This was the traditional Blackfoot story of the Creation, and although it became apparent as the story unfolded that much of the traditional Christian belief had by now become incorporated into the Blackfoot tradition, it became apparent too that here was not only a classic of American Indian legendry but a classic statement of philosophical and religious tolerance from which our overly sophisticated modern world might well derive a meaningful lesson.

126 The occasion of the Chief's telling this story also hosted my first attempt to transcribe Blackfoot into English, and a rereading of this virginal effort never fails to paint my downy cheek with the rubescence of embarrassment. There was nothing wrong with my translation—that was fine—but when it came to preparing the story for publication I apparently felt compelled to imitate the asininities of certain of my predecessors in the field of Indian study because I loaded the phrasing with such conventional Indian corn as, "Hear me!" and "I have spoken!" Granted that a word-for-word translation of Blackfoot into English would not be possible, and granted also that these lofty phrases represent a perfectly valid interpretation of the meanings implicit in the Blackfoot phrases from which they were taken, the fact remains that the very same Blackfoot phrases could with equal validity have been rendered as, "Get this straight, Bus-

his very soul suggested that the marks upon him from this awful experience had not hardened into mere scars but were still open and painful wounds.



THE STARVATION YEAR

At that time they had moved the Agency from Four Persons [Choteau] to Running Crane's place on Big Badger Creek. Now they were moving it again to Old Agency. Most of the things were hauled in two-wheeled ox-carts, and most of the work was done by women. A log stockade was being built around the Agency, and this work was done by the women too. At that time our men had good horses and they were hunters and they did not do women's work. At that time Chief Calf, also known as Buffalo Head, whose influence as head chief of the Piegans was shared by my father, Onistáipokah, died over in Canada. Chief Calf had promised to give Skunk Cap a horse, and when he broke his promise, Skunk Cap performed a secret ceremony to bring Chief Calf bad luck. Two days after the ceremony, Chief Calf died. They brought Chief Calf back home and buried him on a ridge near Old Agency. Before that year was over, hundreds of Piegans were to be buried on that same ridge.

Before the stockade around Old Agency had been completed, the Starvation Year began. The buffalo were gone. My father had led us on the winter hunt the year before, and we had found plenty of buffalo. The old men had called the buffalo with the Beaver Power, and with the power of the Thunder Pipe they had caused the direction of the wind to change so that

124 actual participation—account of this moment of history, and when
731 Jim assured me that the Chief was willing and even anxious to relate the story to me because he wanted the truth to be remembered, I gritted my emotional teeth and asked the Chief if he knew how
731 many Piegans had actually died at that time. The old fellow shook
165 his head and said, "I do not know. No one will ever know. Every-
657 body from little tots to old people died. A lot of the younger people were not even registered at the Agency because after Baker's Mas-
175 sacre the Piegans were afraid to let the Army know that they had children. Many times when people died, the family would just bury them and say nothing so that they could keep drawing the extra rations. Such rations as there were, the Agency distributed to the families on a per capita basis."

I asked the Chief whether he thought that as many as 500 persons might have died. He said, "More than that. Many more than that. At
● [764] first they buried them, but after a while there were so many that they just left the rough boxes (rough coffins) on top of the ridge right out in the open." (The Agent's report for the year of July 1883 to July 1884 numbered only 247 deaths among the Piegans "from all causes." This report is ludicrously inaccurate! Known deaths among the Piegans during the Starvation Year numbered well over five hundred, the actual number almost certainly being in excess of 600.)

175 I asked the Chief whether he personally considered the Agent re-
657 sponsible for the Starvation Year. He replied, "I don't know whose fault it was. When the starvation began, our agent was a man we
731 called Wolf Necklace (John Young). When he wanted something done, he did not ask the Indians the way he should have; he told them what to do as though he were talking to a pack of camp dogs. He did not sit and smoke with the old men, and when the old chiefs gave him presents, he did not give them presents in return. The Piegans did not like Wolf Necklace, and when the starvation began, many of the people blamed him. One fellow, Hump Back, tried to kill him. He shot at Wolf Necklace with a rifle, but he missed.

"My father did not blame Wolf Necklace for the starvation. My father told the people that Wolf Necklace was not giving us rations because there were no rations to give. He told the people that the officials in Washington had not sent the rations they had promised, so we should not blame Wolf Necklace for something that was not his fault.

"I remember one good thing that Wolf Necklace did for the people. Near the Agency there was a trading post—a place the Piegans called Outside-of-Town-House—and when a freight wagon of sup-

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122 the Chief would thunder in the correct phrase. Jimmy said, after
533 a didactic interruption by his father, "Goddam! He interfered with me and now I can't get back where I'm going." The whole thing was really very relaxed and informal, though, with a lot of laughing
[522] and clowning around. At one point, Jim put a large funnel on his head in gesture of crowning himself with a dunce-cap for having goofed up. The only time that a serious note discorded the proceedings was when Paul started to sing a Cree song. The Chief got on him right away and said that he could damn well sing Blackfoot songs or not at all. So they tried to sing some Blackfoot "Crazy Dog" songs and immediately got all screwed up. "Sound like bunch drunks," Jimmy said.

122 I played back the songs, but the recorder had distorted the music
[126] something terrible. So I turned the damn thing off, and while the singers gave out with a few more selections I made a large pot of coffee. Paul and his wife both looked starved, so I heated up some bean soup too. At the table, Paul's wife took her soup spoon directly from her toothless mouth, plunged it into the sugarbowl, and stirred a heaping tablespoonful of sugar into her cup of coffee. Oh well, she sings beautifully. And I don't use sugar anyway.

I am afraid that the Chief's cold is no better. He sneezed loudly at the table, and Phillip said, with a tone of lachrymose poignancy,
[827] "In a old days when you sneezed we used to say your girl friend is thinking for you. Now-days we say you better get to that drug store and get you some medicine."

After I had driven all the guests to Paul's house, Jim and Dad and I each drank two hot toddies. It was still reasonably early, and the medicine songs had induced Dad into a story-telling mood, and as we sipped our drinks he told some medicine stories.

YELLOW WOLF VISITS THE SAND HILLS

539 This happened during the big measles [one of the several
764 epidemics of small pox which struck the Blackfoots]. A lot of
[131] Piegans died at this time, and among them was Yellow Wolf.
[164] We cared for Yellow Wolf in the same manner that we cared
[165] for the others that had passed away: we dressed him in his best clothing and placed a blanket over him and kept him for two days in his lodge. On the second night, when Yellow Wolf's relatives and friends had all arrived and were sitting around the lodge preparing for the funeral, one of the relatives suddenly said, "The blanket is moving!" Then, as everyone

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watched, Yellow Wolf cast off the blanket and sat up. This is the story he told:

"When I passed away, my spirit went to the Sand Hills. I found myself sitting on a large hill, looking out upon a land that was flat and desolate. I knew that my spirit had entered the Sand Hills, and I started down the hill and across the barren plain is search of my parents.

"I had not gone very far when I encountered an elderly gentleman. He asked me where I was going, and when I told him that I was searching for my father and mother, he said, *Yes, you will find them here.*

"So I continued onward, and shortly I met with another old gentleman. He, too, asked me where I was going, and I told him that I was going down to find my father and mother. *Yes,* he said, *they are here. You will find them camped not far from here. They are in a painted lodge.*

"So I found the painted lodge, and entered it, but instead of making me welcome as I had expected, my father just looked at me and then turned his face away. My mother would not even raise her eyes to look at me. I stayed in the lodge just a short while, and since it was apparent that I was not welcome there I decided that I might just as well return to where I had come from.

"So I started back, and soon I encountered again the second of the gentlemen I had met on the way down. He was carrying a log chain and a black handkerchief. He asked me where I was going, and when I told him that I was returning to the other world--the world where my body was--he would not at first believe me. But finally I convinced him that I meant what I said, and then he put the log chain on the ground and covered it with the black handkerchief and asked me to pick them up. So I picked them up, and I found that the log chain had broken apart into separate links. Then the old gentleman placed the links on the ground and covered them with the black handkerchief, and when he picked them up again I saw that all the links had joined together again into a single chain. The old gentleman gave me the log chain and the black handkerchief and told me to take them with me back to where I was going.

"So I continued onward, and before long I met again the first of the old men I had met on the way down. He asked me where I was going, and I told him that my father and mother had not made my spirit welcome in their lodge and so I was

122 771 177 [787] [796] Christian dogma and his own spiritual inheritance. Joe told me of the time that a sixteen-year-old Indian girl had seen a vision of the Virgin Mary. The Virgin had asked the girl to sponsor a Sun Dance (an Indian religious ceremony) at a certain time and place, promising that Jesus would attend the ceremony. So the Sun Dance was held, and afterward, in solid rock, were found the footprints of Jesus, showing where he had stood during the ceremony.

122 764 Our religious discussion finally led into a discussion of Indian burials, and Joe Scabby Robe turned and pointed south, across the creek, to a high pine bluff about two miles away. "You see that pine bluff?" he said. "Just below the ridge, in that open place among the pines? You see that little house up there?"

Now that he had pointed it out, I could see the house quite clearly.

"That's an Indian burial house. That's where old Earrings is buried." And Joe told me that a long time ago, before there was a road across this part of the Reservation, a man named Earrings had been returning from the Agency with supplies when he lost his way in a blizzard and froze to death. He was buried, in the Blackfoot [795] tradition, in a small house constructed especially for that purpose, with his personal belongings left lying close about him in case he should need them in the other life.

I asked Joe whether it would be all right for me to visit the burial house, and he said sure. He even told me how to get there ("You could go that way there, or either go that other way").

122 796 Most of the Pipe Dance guests had arrived now, although an occasional late arriving car or truck would still appear. The house was overflowing with people, and numerous children (Indian children invariably go where their parents go) raced in and out and around the house and visited the outhouse in two's and three's. Joe Scabby Robe went off to find his wife, and I set out to locate the Chief, entering the house by way of the back door which led directly into the big kitchen. The kitchen was crowded with women and children. Mary Ground was there, stirring a huge cauldron which boiled and bubbled on the large woodstove. Also on the stove-top was a two-gallon granite coffeepot. To the right of the kitchen was a small room containing a bed upon which several small children napped. Beyond the kitchen was the main room of the house. I could see the Chief and most of the other men in there, but since this was obviously the room in which the Pipe Dance was to be performed, I did not feel free to enter alone and without invitation.

As I stood uncertainly there in the kitchen, feeling rather like the

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Burial House

Monday, September 10 122

Slept soundly until eight. The Chief and I rolled out at about the same time, and like the iron men we are we faced shoulder to shoulder our matutinal penance—Jimmy's cooking. Jim's pancakes are never exactly a gourmet's delight, but this morning they were so bad that even Jim couldn't eat them.

"Goddam!" Jim said, after I had sadistically invited him to sample one of his own creations. "I must a forgot the something in the pancakes. Twice of a sometime [once in a while] I'll did that. Think I'll eat another two couple slice bread instead."

The Chief, who has the digestion of a boa constrictor, continued to eat as though the pancakes were fit for human consumption. I took "two couple slice bread" and made an egg sandwich.

The Chief wanted to go to town right after breakfast, but I insisted upon a half-hour in which to take a bath and put on clean clothes. Jimmy washed to the waist, and I noted that, although his face and hands are a deep copper color, those portions of his anatomy which are kept fully clothed are quite light. I am convinced that the darkness of an Indian's skin is the result of a pigmental response to the elements. [142]

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ness, the wind was a strong but not unpleasant carrier of outdoor smells, and in a relaxed and happy mood I sat for several minutes there on the slope-steepness, allowing the willing cleanness and unhurried reality of out-of-doors to enter into myself. 122

I continued on around the hill, and there, sure enough, in the lea of the ridge, in a small open place among the pines on the north-east side, was the burial house. It was a small, pitch-roofed cabin built of pine lumber that had weathered to a silvery gray. The little house had no windows at all, and I could tell that the open entranceway had never owned a door. All around the outside of the building, logs had been coupled together, Lincoln-log fashion, barring the doorway to a height of about 3½ feet. 122 349 764

The burial house was much smaller than it had appeared from down at Starr School—it was only twelve or fifteen feet square—and once again I marveled at the tremendous distances which lie at eye's command here in high, dry Montana. Turning, I could see every detail—miles away—of Jim White Grass' house. Children were playing in the yard down there, and white chickens strutted about.

I walked to the doorway of the burial house and looked in. The sunlight was very strong, revealing every detail of the interior of the little unwindowed house: the sturdy pine plank floor, the weathered but undecayed walls, the roof that was still tight and protective after all these years and through which no small shaft of sun betrayed an entranceplace for snow or rain. My first impression was one of surprise, for this small gray house was the burial place of not one but four. On the far right, in an uncovered, casket-like box, was the stripped and white remains of something that had once stood tall, and I knew immediately that this had once been a man called Earrings. The glistening white bones, to which small pieces of dark and desiccated flesh still clung, were tossed in disarray as though by animals. A few shredded rags alone testified that Earrings had been placed here fully clothed. 122 764

Against the far wall, behind Earrings, was a small closed casket large enough only for a child. And there were two other boxes, both open. On the left, clothing was yet nearly intact on the shrunken form of a half-grown boy. The body appeared undisturbed, except that one of the skeletal legs was twisted grotesquely sideways, projecting over the side of the box a brown, brogan-type shoe—un-walked upon.

Directly in front of me, with most of the clothing torn away, was the almost perfectly mummified remains of another adult, lying straight and with the dark, claw-like hands at stiff repose over the

122 764 withered, ustulate rib-cage. The floor of the burial house was an incredible litter of rags and papers and bones and a shoe or two. In the air was a faint sweetish smell.

None of the human remains here on the hill had a head, and this puzzled me until, turning from the doorway, I saw glinting in the sun nearby a shiny metal can with the word "COLA" lettered on the side. And then, of course, I knew that some tourist or some student of anthropology must have told quite a tale as he displayed the souvenirs that he had stolen, ghoul-like, from the burial place of human beings.

122 765 I did not remain very long at the burial house, and I did not go inside, and although I had brought two cameras I did not take any pictures. At first I had experienced nothing really unusual up here on the ridge, but now, as I angrily kicked the Cola can and stood in arms-akimbo embarrassment for my race, I began to sense the presence of something unearthly. I did not see anything; I did not hear anything but the wind; but I felt something—something that did not welcome my presence here. And suddenly I realized that although I could not say that I saw or heard anything, neither could I swear that I *did not* see or hear something. It was a very strange sensation, and one not entirely comforting. I wanted to be gone from this place, but with Anglo-Saxon stubbornness I forced myself instead to sit down under a pine tree and to look for a long minute at Starr School and at the pick-up truck which moved slowly down the road below, trailing close upon itself a thick, sciuroid tail of dust, I noticed that Sweetgrass Hill, far to the northeast, was not wearing a hat this afternoon.

If I were a smoker, I should have lighted a cigarette and smoked it very slowly. But I am not, so before rising to go I ostentatiously and with deliberate slowness untied and then re-tied my shoes. Then, instead of taking the trail back around the side of the ridge, I climbed to the very ridgetop. The top was bare of trees, and many years ago someone had piled there a large cairn of flat rocks—purple, pale green, pink, all the colors of the stones of Montana. The view from the cairn was magnificent, but I stayed for only a moment. After all, I had told nobody that I was coming up here. My car was hidden out of sight in the aspens behind the ridge. I was miles from the road. The fellows would worry about me. Besides, it was now mid-afternoon and I had not yet eaten lunch.

I started down the slope toward the aspen grove in which the station wagon was parked. The going was very steep, and I slipped a good deal. It was easier to go down fast, in sideways bounds.

White Man to elevate the Blackfoot Indian even unto the artful employment of profanity and imprecation. And even when a Blackfoot is cussing a veritable English blue streak, chances are that he does not, even today, understand the traditional implications of the *náh-pi-quon* phrases he is using; more than likely he believes that he is employing terms of strong emphasis, nothing more. 195 177

About the worst thing you can call someone in Blackfoot is *i-mi-dés-ki* (dog face), and since this is a term the Blackfoots formerly used in reference to the White soldier (because of his moustache?), Blackfoot may well be the origin of that term as now universally applied to the American infantryman. [578]

The only home-grown expletive I have ever heard the Chief use is, *"I-mi-táu-chi-kahn!"*—a word which he employs with purely humorous connotation and which could perhaps best be translated as referring to the vernacular portion of a dog. 195

I told the Chief about my experiences up on the pine ridge (Jimmy translating) and the Chief considered it all unremarkable enough; however, he could not explain my having smelled cigar smoke. (Cigar is a word that the Blackfoots got from the Whites. The Blackfoot *tsi-kái-yeh* is quite obviously the French *cigarre* expressed in Blackfoot phonemes. Another Blackfoot word for cigar, which Jim usually but not always pronounces, *Bo-tsíp-stahk-kan*, translates as "all tobacco.") 122

Jim explained that the Blackfoot word for ghost is *stúh-aw* and that the burial house on the ridge is referred to by the Indians as the "ghost house." The Chief was surprised to learn that someone had made off with Earrings' head, because this is definitely a recent occurrence, but I learned that grave-robbing is nothing new to the Reservation. The traditional Blackfoot method of burial was the scaffold or tree burial (chiefs and men of prominence were sometimes left at rest in a teepee high on some hill or ridge), and the Chief explained the reason that the burial house came into existence among his people. The Blackfoots left the earthly remains of their departed loved-ones wrapped in a robe and tied to a scaffold which was placed either in a tree (usually by a stream or on a bluff above a stream) or atop a cairn of flat stones. The Blackfoots believed that when the body had served its earthly purpose of transporting through life the spirit of an individual, the body should return to the earth and so nourish the earth to the creation of new life (this is certainly a philosophy much more beautiful than the White Man's encasing the dead body in a vault in order to "protect" it from any possibility of its renewing the soil which had given it birth). But the 122 764 [795] 764 [774] [812] [177]

764 White Man, who considered the Indian burial scaffold to be "in-
177 decent" and "unsightly," not only forbade the Blackfoots the privi-
lege of burial according to the Blackfoot belief but actually went
about tearing down those burial scaffolds which already existed. So
[175] the Blackfoot, understandably reluctant to inter his loved-one in a
closed grave from which, according to Indian belief, the soul could
not escape, secretly began to construct small burial houses which he
hoped would pass in the White Man's observation as ordinary places
of residence. This worked all right for a while, and at one time
there were many burial houses on the Reservation--the Chief's father
was placed in a small house atop a large, barren hill just to the
southeast of Starr School--but during the 1930's the W.P.A. was sent
onto the Reservation to "improve and beautify" the land and the
bastards tore down every burial house they could find. They were
supposed to give the remains decent burial, but in most instances
they were too lazy to do this and after pocketing whatever valuables
had been placed in the burial house along with the deceased, they
tore the place down and scattered the remains like so much garbage
(little did they know that the Indians preferred this to burial).
But the Indians did *not* prefer that the W.P.A. workers steal the
skulls and trade them to saloonkeepers for drinks. One saloon in Cut
Bank, a town just across the Reservation line, had a collection of
such Indian skulls lined up behind the bar until, I am gratified to
report, decent persons of both races forced their removal.

Earrings' burial place apparently was protected by its very re-
moteness and difficulty of access, and so far as I have been able to
learn it is the only "ghost house" left in this part of the Reservation.
165 The Chief remembers Earrings very well, and with his impeccable
honesty he told me the true tale of how Earrings bit the dust. It
happened about fifty years ago, in the fall of the year during an un-
seasonable cold spell such as the one we have been having lately.
Earrings was coming from town all right, and although he was car-
rying supplies he was also carrying a plentiful supply of extract--
most of it inside himself--and he got drunk and passed out and froze
to death. An empty extract can was lying nearby when they found
him. (I'll bet he was the drunk sonofagun that chased me down the
[764] hill.) The Chief does not know the identities of Earrings' grave-
mates, and he did not know that they were there in the ghost house.
[I was later able to identify them as certain of Earrings' relatives.]

114 The conversation dwelt throughout the evening on Blackfoot
764 religious beliefs in general and on Blackfoot burial customs in par-
ticular. The Chief informed me that Schultz was buried by the

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Blackfoots, at his own request, in the Indian manner. This was undoubtedly James Willard Schultz, a fur trader during the latter portion of the nineteenth century who lived from time to time among the Blackfoots and who wrote some three dozen books of varied worth about the Plains Indians. He was buried down at Two Medicine, next to a Blackfoot chief named Red Eagle.

During the course of our discussion, the Chief told once again about the belief of the Blackfoot Indian that after death his spirit resides in the Sand Hills (Jimmy translates it as "Big Sandy"), a rather desolate region in the Province of Saskatchewan. The Chief says that you can track the spirits in the Sand Hills, but that at the end of each set of tracks you always find the same thing—a dead mouse. If this belief isn't enough to jar even the most smug *Náhpiquon* amongst us, it certainly should be because it strikes pretty close to home. No matter what kind of tracks you make through this world, Buster—barefoot, moccasin, wagon track or Cadillac—when you go you can't take any more with you than the humblest mouse that ever got caught in a five-cent trap. I can already visualize a story based on this concept. Title: "The Trail of the Mouse."

It is late now, and the Chief does not feel at all well. Jim and I are sitting up with him. I am typing, and Jim is lamenting the fact that he has only a fourth grade education. He is aware that Indians should learn to make better preparation for the future.

Just read over the part about my feeling the Presence as I came down from the burial house. It is difficult not to dramatize an experience such as this, but I have sincerely attempted not to. I have tried to record what happened—what I felt and thought—as objectively as possible, for to do otherwise would be to cheat myself. When an experience is set down on paper, the written description of the experience becomes, in time, the experience itself; consequently, to distort in any way the written record of an experience is to cast away irretrievably a portion of one's life. This fact was impressed upon me very strongly on the occasion of our recent visit to Heart Butte. The Heart Butte racetrack had provided the setting for my story, "Horserace," and I had passed an entire afternoon at the Heart Butte track and I had thought that I knew the place in its every detail and that I could never forget it. But when finally I went there again, I went as a total stranger. Nothing was familiar. It had been necessary in my writing to alter certain details of the scene in order to meet the symbolic demands of the story, and I found myself now searching not for those features of terrain which

inform him that his nephew had been murdered by the Blood Indians—that he should immediately attack them, and, therefore, advised us to return as speedily as possible. 682

On reaching the fort we learned that the nephew of the Bear Chief, a very quiet, well-disposed Indian, had ridden out in the morning to look for a horse which had been stolen from him, and had been murdered not far off, on the hills, by the Blood Indians, who had attacked him with their guns, knives, and clubs. Ninoch-Kiaiu was furious, and he now came to Mr. Mitchell to consult with him what was to be done. A sensible old Indian advised that this matter should not be treated as a concern of the whole tribe, but as a private affair, and, consequently, they should wait patiently for an opportunity when they might take vengeance on some member of the murderer's family. The chief, who felt that his honour was deeply wounded, was silent, and lost in thought. As a sign of mourning, he had put on his worst clothes, but not cut off his hair, saying that "his head was too great and strong to do this." [*A portrait of Ninoch-Kiaiu in mourning is on page 159.*] He had loaded with ball the double-barrelled gun which he had lately received, and suddenly hastened away without saying a word. He afterwards sent word to Mr. Mitchell, that he must go to revenge his kinsman, whose dead body he would not see; but, that it might fall into good hands, he would make a present of it to Mr. Mitchell, whom he requested to bury it. As the murder of the Indian was a consequence of the offence which Ninoch-Kiaiu had offered to the Blood Indians, on the occasion of Martin's death, the present could not well be refused. [A] [B] [165] [184] 431 682

AUGUST 17, 1833

Early in the morning, the howling and lamenting of the Indians in the camp was heard; and, soon afterwards, the corpse of the murdered man was brought into the fort. It was wrapped up very tightly in buffalo skins, and tied to a travois drawn by one horse. An old man, with a multitude of women and children, his relations, followed the body with loud lamentations. An aged woman in the train had just cut off one joint of her little finger as a sign of mourning, and held the bleeding stump wrapped in a handful of wormwood leaves. When our people had taken the body from the travois between the two gates of the fort, and carried it into the Indian apartment, a young man, the brother of the Bear Chief, 764 [161]

[p.105-B]

A, [See Category 765, p. 139--Analyst]

B, [i.e., the accidental death of a white man; see Category 177, p. 103-A--Analyst]

made a speech to the weeping relatives, saying—"Why do you lament and cry?—see, I do not cry: he is gone into the other country, and we cannot awaken him; but, at least, two Blood Indians must accompany him and wait upon him there." An infant, and a boy, the brother of the deceased, died on the same night; and the Indians said that the murdered brother had called the others away. [*In his field journal Maximilian identifies the dead infant as a child of David Mitchell, the issue of a liaison with an Indian woman. The infant was buried in the same grave with the murdered Blackfoot and his dead brother.*]

Thus we had three dead bodies in the fort. As that of the Indian had long been exposed to the air and the sun, it was necessary to make haste to get it out of the way; and Berger, the interpreter, had the disagreeable office of painting, putting on its best clothes, and ornamenting it in the Indian fashion. The two Indians were laid in the same grave, wrapped in a red blanket and buffalo skin, over which was laid a piece of coloured stuff, given by Mr. Mitchell. The bottom and sides of the grave were lined with boards; the body, too, was covered with wood; his bridle, whip, and some other trifles were thrown in, and the grave filled up.

August 18, 1833

Ninoch-Kiaiu now continually talked of going to a little camp of the Blood Indians, on the other side of the river, to take vengeance. His brother, who likewise made a great noise, walked about the fort with a loaded pistol, and, at last, begged Mr. Mitchell to have him conveyed over the river, because it was thought that two Blood Indians had been seen, whom he wanted to shoot; to which Mr. Mitchell very calmly replied, that "if he intended to kill any body, he would not assist him." With an expression of violent passion, the Indian, on this, mounted his horse and galloped away, "in order," as the chief said, "to quiet his heart for the present, by the death of a Blood, as they might, at some future time, shoot the real murderer." The chief's aged uncle, Natoie-Poochsen (the word of life), was one of the principal mourners. He had cut off his hair, and besmeared it, as well as his feet and legs, with whitish clay. Mr. Bodmer made a good portrait of him in this dress. [*For this likeness, see page 138.*] He went about howling and crying, while the Bear Chief thought only of procuring brandy. He had in his hand a little mustard-glass filled

A. [See Category 765, p. 138 - Analyst]

remains of the Assiniboin who was slain, and which were now so pierced and burnt as scarcely to retain any semblance of the human form. As the Indians near the fort believed themselves to be now quite safe, they carried the wounded into the leather tents, which were injured and pierced through and through by the enemy's balls, round which many dead horses and dogs were lying, and the crying and lamenting were incessant. 727

About one o'clock Mr. Mitchell and his people returned, much fatigued by the expedition, and the great heat, the thermometer being at 84°. Mr. Mitchell's horse had been shot through the withers; he himself fell off and hurt his arm; another horse was shot through the neck, and captured by the enemy; Bourbonnais, its rider, had escaped. All our people, however, had returned safe. The enemy had been driven back to Marias River, where, from the want of bravery in the Blackfeet, they were able to maintain their ground behind the trees; nay, they had sometimes advanced and repulsed their enemies. They were plainly heard encouraging each other, on which they came forward in parties of twenty or thirty, and renewed the attack. It was generally observed that the Assiniboins fought better than the Blackfeet, many of whom did not leave the fort during the whole day. Mr. Mitchell, with his people, had always been in advance of the Blackfeet, and nearer to the enemy. He had often shamed the Blackfeet, whose numbers had increased to 500 or 600, calling out, "Why did they lag behind? They had reproached the Whites with cowardice, but now it was seen who were the most cowardly. Now was the time to show their courage." The hunter, Dechamp, had especially distinguished himself by his bravery and well-directed fire at the enemy, of whom he had killed or wounded several. 726

The Indians had fired quite at random, otherwise the loss must have been much greater on both sides. We learnt, later, that the Assiniboins had three killed, and twenty severely wounded. Many Indians took Mr. Mitchell by the hand, welcomed him as their friend and ally, and offered him several horses, which he did not accept. We visited the wounded in their tents, had the blood washed from their wounds, and their hair, which was clotted with it, cut off; and gave them medicines and plaster, and, instead of brandy, which they asked for, sugar and water to refresh them. A child had died of its wounds; they had daubed its face with vermilion. 000 727 764

[p. 111-A]